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February 1988
Number 44
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ELECTRONIC ARTS®

COMPUTER Gaming World

February 1988

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DEPARTMENTS

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Psalm 9:1-2

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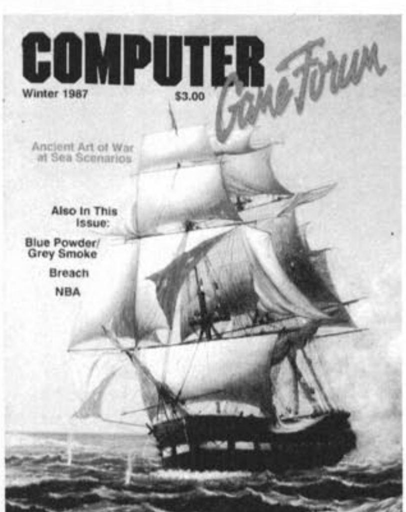
« Circle Reader Service #19

An Open Letter to the Subscribers of *Computer Game Forum*

Frankly, we thought our quarterly magazine, Computer Game Forum, was pretty innovative. After all, no one else had a "Rumor Bag" to leak the industry's gossip or a "Source Code" to help bridge the gap between consumer and publisher. We also thought we had a different style from our flagship magazine. Creating that humorous "Table of Contents;" coming up with satirical songs and epitaphs for "Boot Hill;" attempting to be controversial in the editorial and "Forum Input Barometer;" and developing scenarios for each issue were major efforts.



Alas, our "baby" could not stand against the competition. "What competition?" you may ask before ripping this page out, wadding it up, and throwing it into the fireplace. You may even go so far as to suggest that there were not any other publications like Computer Game Forum. We believe you would be correct, but our advertisers and potential advertisers believe you would be in error. It seems that Forum's greatest competition was, believe it or not, Computer Gaming World itself. Advertisers insisted that our newest publication was not distinctive enough to warrant their attention. They reasoned that subscribers read Computer Game Forum for the same reasons that they read Computer Gaming World. Therefore, advertising in both magazines was a duplication of effort and not cost-effective. If advertising in only one of the magazines was useful, they assured us, CGW would be the one.



Now, we know that many of our readers found the paucity of advertisements in CGF to be refreshing. Nevertheless, the discriminating reader knows that advertisements keep magazines in business. We were faced with the prospect of losing money on CGF, and having CGW itself at risk as a result, or turning the problem into an opportunity for expansion.

CGW subscribers responded to the introduction of Computer Game Forum enthusiastically. We assumed that this was because you wanted more coverage of computer games and a publication to fill in the gaps when CGW did not publish (three months each year). Therefore, when the advertising agreements did not materialize, we had to determine a way to satisfy your needs and desires without "losing our shirt."

Since the demand is out there and advertisers would rather advertise in Computer Gaming World than CGF, we have decided to take a step we have been considering for some time and **go monthly with CGW.** *At the same time we are discontinuing CGF. Thus you hold in your hands the first ever monthly issue of Computer Gaming World. Like a phoenix rising from the ashes of the officially discontinued Computer Game Forum, a new expanded monthly Computer Gaming World arises!*

What this means to the CGF subscribers is that they will get the number of issues of Forum remaining to them added on to their CGW subscriptions. Now, instead of a 26 page two color newsletter/magazine, they will be getting a 54+ page four color magazine for the same price. That is an increase of more than 100% at no additional cost.

We believe this is good news, but we recognize that there may be subscribers who feel like this is not fair (we hope not!). In those cases, we will refund the remaining credit on your Forum subscription.

Of course, there may be those subscribers out there who are saying, "I will definitely miss [insert Forum feature here]!" To those subscribers we are happy to say that those features will be added as alternating columns in Computer Gaming World. In other words, we will still try to provide "Inside The Industry," "The Rumor Bag," "The Source Code," "Scorpion's Mail," "Abstracts from the Journal of Computer Game Design," and "Boot Hill" on, at the very least, a quarterly basis. We will also try to provide more scenario and strategy articles.

We want to express our heartfelt appreciation to all of you subscribers who believed in us enough to subscribe to Computer Game Forum. We want to express extra appreciation to those visionary advertisers who felt that Forum had something more to offer than a "cost per thousand" rate. Finally, I offer a Hebrew toast ("Lechayyim" - "To Life!") to our publisher, art director, advertising representatives, writers, artists, and even, yours truly. What we attempted to accomplish in Forum will live on in CGW. The effort is not wasted and Computer Gaming World will become, we trust, even better as a result. We hope that both the subscribers and the industry as a whole will agree. Forum, we hardly knew ya'! Nevertheless, we move forward.

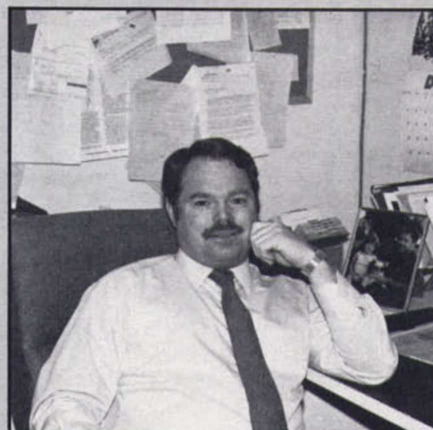
Johnny Wilson
Former Editor
Computer Game Forum



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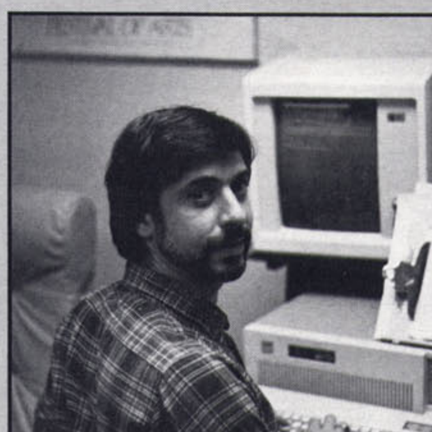
Let's "Take A Peek" at the CGW Staff
And See Some Of Their Interests



Russell Sipe / Publisher-Editor
Astrophotography, Dancing, Baseball



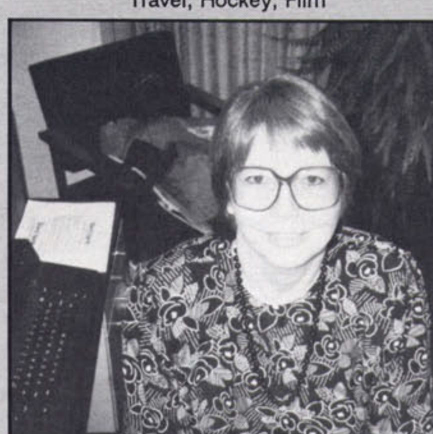
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Jerry Lambright / Shipping
Sports, SF/Fantasy , Role-Playing Games

TAKING A PEEK

Access Software
2561 South 1560 West
Woods Cross, UT 84087

ECHELON: At first glance, this 3-D Space Flight Simulator looks like a half dozen other programs. Do not be fooled. Not only does this simulator include non-military expeditions, but comes complete with a voice-actuation controller, "The Lipstick," which enables players to "Fire" without pushing a button. C-64. Circle Card #1.

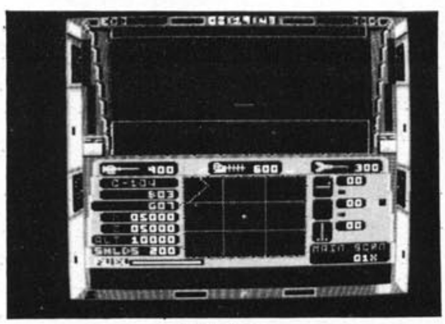
Activision, Inc.
P.O. Box 7286
Mountain View, CA

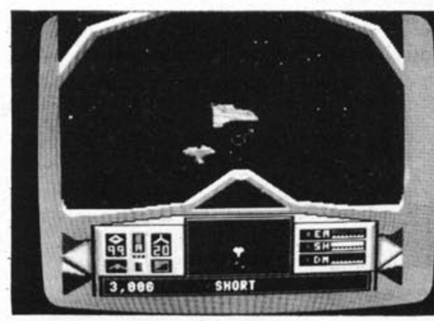
STAR RANK BOXING II: This revision of the Gamestar division's popular "Star Rank Boxing" simulation offers better animation and more sensitive player control over the boxers. As in the earlier version, players may create their own boxers, train them, manage them, and fight them. Up to five fighters in each class may be created and saved. IBM ($39.95). Circle Reader Service Card #2.

Broderbund
17 Paul Drive
San Rafael, CA

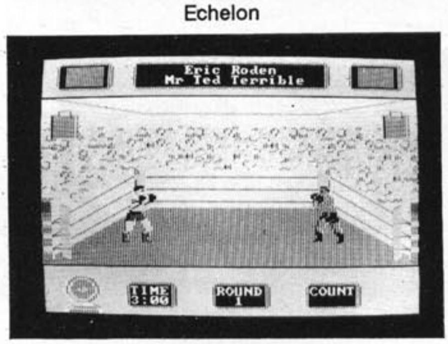
MAGNETRON: This arcade adventure pits the player, as pilot of a photon fighter, against the "magnetron generators" of an alien siege force. The fighters must penetrate the orbital bases where these generators are located and

Advertisers

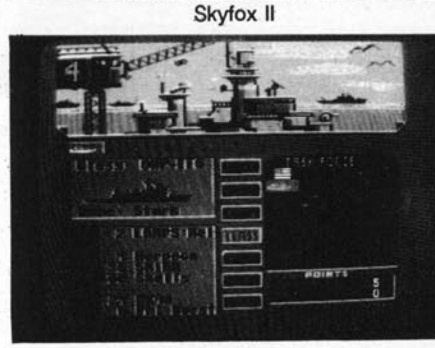

Echelon

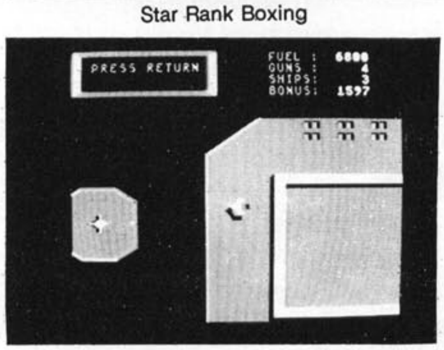


Skyfox II

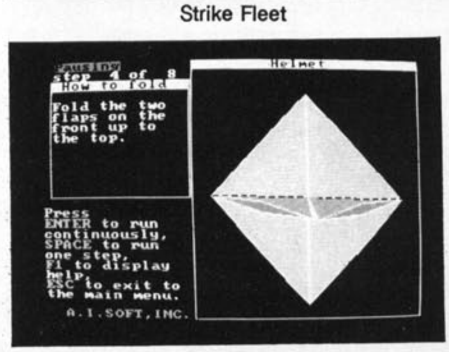


Star Rank Boxing


Strike Fleet



Magnetron



3D Origami

destroy them. Pilots must generally avoid the walls of the orbital bases, however, while dealing with a ship that must be piloted via thrusters. Momentum plays an extremely significant factor in controlling the ship and increasing the difficulty factor. C-64 ($24.95). Circle Reader Service Card #3.

Electronic Arts
1820 Gateway Drive
San Mateo, CA

SKYFOX II: Players pilot a Skyfox II warp fighter in this sequel to the popular action game. On-board weaponry for "warpwarriors" includes: neutron disrupters, photon pulse bombs, and anti-matter mines. The game includes ten possible missions with names which read like a science fiction anthology: "Diplomatic Immunity," "Incoming," "Xenomorph Uprising," "Guardian," and "The Boondock Expedition," among others. C-64 ($29.95). Circle Reader Service Card #4.

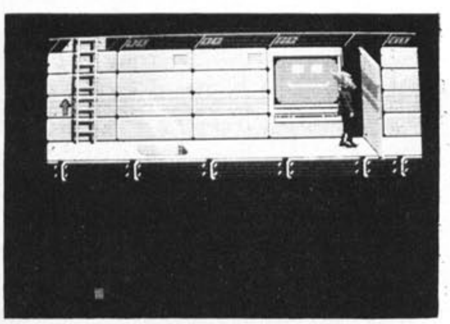
STRIKE FLEET: Players command task fleets of up to 16 vessels and four helicopters in this game of modern naval warfare. As in the earlier Lucasfilm Games and Electronic Arts combined venture, "PHM Pegasus," the object of this strategy/action game seems to be to put the player inside the ships. In this case, the player can have the viewpoint of any one of the ship's captains or the pilot of the helicopter. Successful players can rise through the ranks to the position of Fleet Admiral. Of course, "court martial" is a live option in this game, as well. C-64 ($29.95). Circle Reader Service Card #5.

Japan International Software
5300 Stevens Creek Blvd.
San Jose, CA

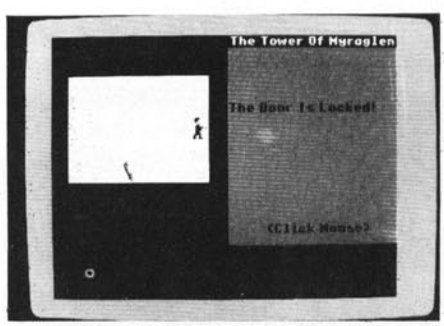
3D ORIGAMI: Those who are looking for a way to absorb some traditional Japanese culture before the dollar is devoured by the yen may be interested in the ancient art of paper folding. Origami is a therapeutic and restful activity. This program, complete with honourable Japanese music soundtrack, leads westerners step by step from the simplest paper cup to a very complex "Crane Card" as it unravels the threads of mystery surrounding this art. IBM. Circle Reader Service Card #6.

Microillusions
P.O. Box 3475
Granada Hills, CA

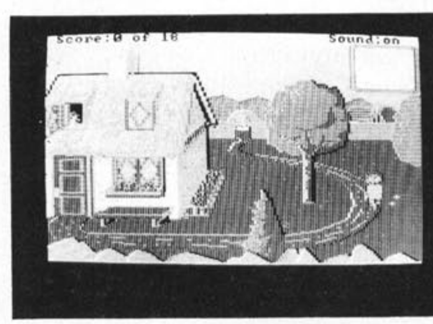
DISCOVERY: It's a space adventure! It's an arcade game! It's . . . (gulp!) an educational game! Yes, this flexible game uses elements from all three genres to create a fascinating product for youngsters from grade school through high school. The basic game comes with either elementary mathematics questions or spelling. Players explore the ship, using a joystick to jump over potentially deadly alien specimens (not quite as deadly as those in "Aliens," however), locating the crystals needed to restore the spaceship "Discovery" to operating efficiency, and answering questions from the ship's security computer in order to open doors. There are eleven ex-



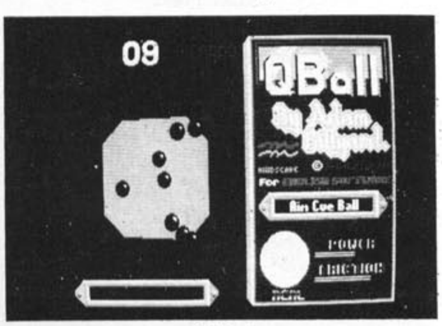
Discovery



Tower of Myraglen



Mixed-Up Mother Goose



Q-Ball



A.I.



Star Trek:Rebel Universe

pansion disks in the works which include: science, history, social studies, math concepts, language, geography, and others. Amiga ($39.95 for basic set, $19.95 for expansion disks). Circle Reader Service Card #7.

ROMANTIC ENCOUNTERS AT THE DOME: Whether you fancy yourself as a "sensual single" or simply want to try on a "wild and crazy" lifestyle, this "R"-rated text adventure game may be your ticket to kinkiness. The designer of the game is an award-winning playwrite and screenwriter (Lee Thomas) and he has attempted to create situations where players can "act out" responses rather than the mere puzzle-solving that is so common in text adventures. Background research was also provided by a practicing psychologist. This means that when your character is tired of "playing around," he/she can visit the Psychological Department for some "Love Capacity Testing." Amiga, IBM ($39.95). Circle Reader Service Card #8.

Mindscape, Inc.
3444 Dundee Road
Northbrook, IL

Q-BALL: If you have ever wished you could pick up a billiard table and flip it over to get a better angle on the ball, this is the game for you. Another stunning European arcade import, this game has splendid graphics and sound, but the most incredible feature is the rotation of the playing surface (262,144 different angles). "I say, old boy, nothing ho-hum about this billiard product." Amiga ($29.95). Circle Reader Service Card #9.

PBI Software
1163 Triton Drive
Foster City, CA

TOWER OF MYRAGLEN: As the last remaining Knight of Justice ("Have Sword Will Travel"), players must enter the Tower of Myraglen and attempt to retrieve the Medallion of Soul Stealing to save the Kingdom. The game uses both the sound and graphics capabilities of the the IIGS well and involves riddles and puzzles in addition to the fast reflexes needed to succeed at the game. IIGS with 512K ($54.95). Circle Reader Service Card #10.

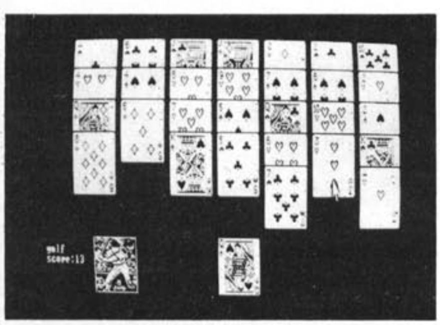
Scholastic, Inc.
730 Broadway
New York, NY

A.I.: A teacher's manual, two game disks, and an Apple II with 128K are needed in order to embark on this "Experience With Artificial Intelligence." This learning tool is designed like a well-designed laboratory manual and can provide ten different experiments in discovering how to simulate intelligence by means of a computer. Apple II with 128K or IIGS ($69.95 for educator's edition, $49.95 for home product). Circle Reader Service Card #11.

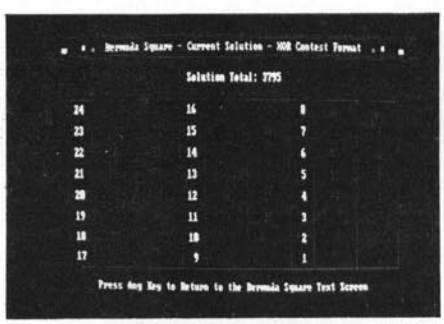
Sierra
P.O. Box 485
Coarsegold, CA

MIXED-UP MOTHER GOOSE: Roberta Williams, designer of the

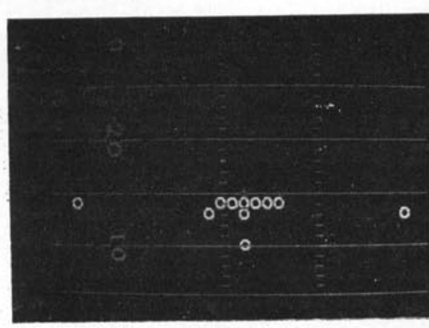
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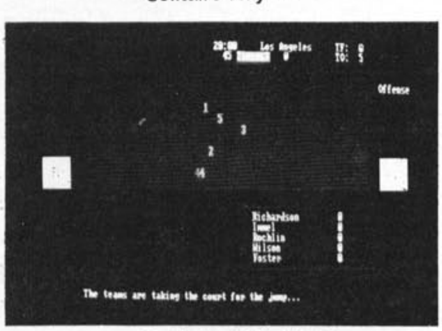
Solitaire Royale



Bermuda Square



Pro Challenge



Basketball Challenge



Oligopoly

Please fill out Reader Input Device on Page 55

THE RUMOR BAG





by Alfredo Gambino Coloma Giancanna

Southern Californians are unable to resist the lure of the slopes on those rare occasions when the snow level drops into the vicinity of our local mountains. My editor suggested that my writing was going a little stale, so it might be worthwhile for me to take some time off and venture into the white stuff. Now, I wasn't really expecting to pick up any juicy rumors about entertainment software when I visited Snow Valley, but I no sooner entered the rental shop than I overheard the name, **Infocom**. My ears perked up and this advertising type started talking about this new *Legends of Literature* series that the company is supposed to be working on. He said that *Sherlock: The Riddle of the Crown Jewels* is supposed to be the first release in this series. He also said that this product marks the first time **Infocom** has used an outside developer to design a product for them.

I didn't hear what else he said because I was grunting too loudly as I pulled my boots on. My doctor told me I had been eating too much pasta. Still, I couldn't wait to get lined up for the lift to the beginner slope, so I popped into line behind two guys with United States Olympic Committee patches on their jackets. Imagine my surprise when I discovered that they were talking about their new licensing agreement with **Epyx**. Apparently, the company which published *Winter Games* is planning to launch a new product entitled *The Games/Winter Edition* tied to the games in Calgary. The game is being developed with the assistance of the U.S.O.C. and previous Olympic team members. Big things seem to be happening in Redwood City because **Epyx** is expected to announce its new "Consumer Electronics Division" at the **Winter Consumer Electronics Show**.

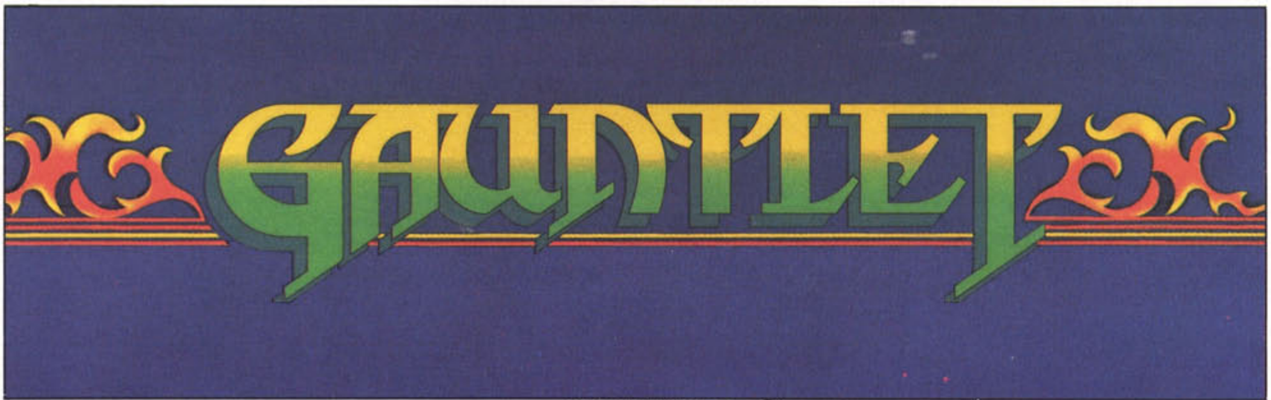
The chair lift took us to the start of the beginner slope. As usual, I was careful to criss-cross the slope in tight turns in order to keep my speed down. Unfortunately, I committed the unpardonable sin of skiing. I didn't get my skis at the right angle and found myself pointed straight down the hill. My right ski came off and I found myself flying directly toward one of the snow-making machines (we have to enhance everything in California), ludicrously balanced on one ski and travelling at a preposterous rate of speed. My life passed before my eyes, especially the recent days when I picked up a tip about **Interstel**'s *Empire*. It seems the company is planning to release another version, perhaps *Empire II*, in 1988. In this new version, infantry and armored units would be handled differently; aircraft could be transported by ship; paratrooper units would be available; full modem play is anticipated; and a full editing system (including scenario editor, map editor, and ability to name individual cities) should be added. The company's aim is to provide enhancements without allowing the game to become bogged down with morale, supply rules and other details. I also remembered that **Interstel** is planning on releasing a fishing simulator for bass fishermen (*Gone Fishing*) on the Atari ST and a boating, exploring simulation entitled *First Expedition* (IBM).

With not a moment to lose, I

(Continued on page 48)

CUT HERE





CUT HERE

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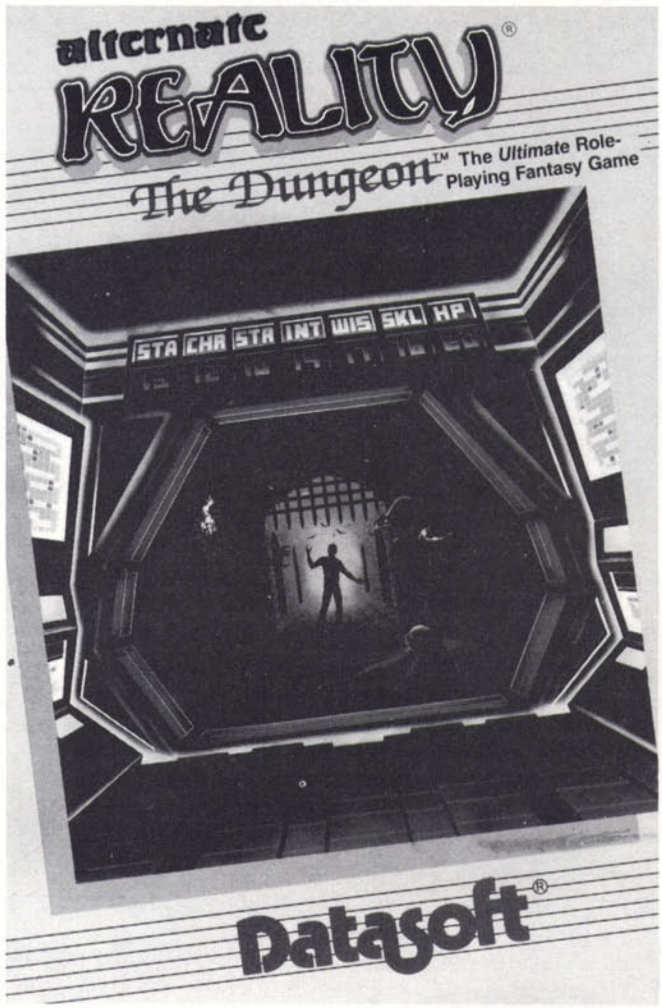
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alternate REALITY®



The Dungeon

by Scorpia

Scorpia's review of the sequel to Alternate Reality: The City *contains numerous hints.*

TITLE:	Alternate Reality: The Dungeon
SYSTEMS:	Apple, Atari 8-bit C-64
PRICE:	$34.95-$39.95
DESIGNERS:	Ken Jordan Dan Pinal Philip Price
PUBLISHER:	Datasoft Chatsworth, CA

In a dim, unused corner of Xebec's Demise, a door creaks open onto darkness. Worn steps wind downward, going deep below the city. At the bottom lies the Dungeon, the beginning of the journey towards enlightenment, and, perhaps, escape . . . or revenge. The stairs beckon, and the first steps are taken on that journey .

Alternate Reality, Too!

The second scenario in the epic *Alternate Reality* series, *The Dungeon* continues the saga of the human kidnapped by aliens and dropped into a bizarre world for unknown reasons. *The City* was nothing more than a struggle for survival; The Dungeon begins the quest for information and a return home.

Since this is a continuation, you can bring your character over from The City, and this is highly recommended. Note, however, that the transfer is one-way; you can take a character from City to Dungeon, but not from Dungeon to City. Also, not all of your equipment may make the transfer. I was quite surprised, and not a little upset, that both of my magical swords did not come with me into The Dungeon. Ordinary weapons (as well as crystal plate), however, should make the transition intact.

Mapping, as usual, will be a major activity. The Dungeon is a large place, comprised of four levels of descending size. Level one is the same size as the city, 64x64. Level two is only half that, 32x32; level three is half again, being 16x16; and level four is a minuscule 8x8. The bottom three are actually relatively easy to map. Most of your efforts will be spent on level one.

The Underground Gourmet

Unlike the previous game, there is only one store, one tavern, and one inn. These are all on the first level and fairly close to your starting point. The Damon and Pythias Store (run by Omar and his twin brother Jeff) is a combined armorer, clothier, and provisioner. Here, you can stock up on food packets and water flasks, purchase clothing, weapons, and armor, exchange copper and silver for gold, and sell gems and jewelry.

Omar (as well as Jeff) is open to bargaining on weapons, armor, and clothing. Everything else has a fixed price and there is no haggling. However, do watch the prices when you buy multiples of food and water. Omar's math is sometimes a little off ("Four water flasks at one silver each . . . let me see, that comes to five silvers").

The Retreat is the place to sleep. For a small donation of coppers, you can get a spot on the floor. There are no rooms. Any amount over 30 coppers will get you a place by the fire. Spend less, and you'll end up in a corner or the drafty spot by the door. Still, they *will* take any amount, but you must give *something* to stay the night. If you are broke, you are out of luck.

At Der Rathskeller, you can purchase food and drink for immediate consumption. No water flasks or food packets are sold here. If you leave early, though, the remains of your unfinished meal will be wrapped up (as a sort of doggy bag) and serve as an extra food packet. If you buy enough rounds for the house, and wait long enough (this takes a lot of patience), mysterious strangers will come by the bar or table and pass along cryptic information in return for a meal or a drink. Only one such stranger will appear during any visit.

One thing absent from The Dungeon is a Healer shop. You must rely (at least at the start) on running across a wandering Healer if you need hit points restored, poisons nullified, or diseases cleansed. While the prices are fairly high (1 hp res-

tored per silver piece; 50 silvers to cure poison, and 100 to cure diseases), the Healer is actually a kindly soul, who will heal you for whatever money you're carrying, leaving you broke but healthy. Note, however, he will leave immediately after performing a service if you have no money left.

A Bard in a Guilded Cage

There are eight guilds underground (four good, four evil) and you can join them (a great relief to 8-bit owners, who were not able to join any City Guilds). Which ones depend, naturally, on whether the game considers you to be good or evil and by how much. Some guilds may accept you right away, others may be more choosy.

The first guild you join is your primary guild. They give you a ring that provides energy for casting spells (rechargeable at a price) and a locker where you can store excess valuables, such as food, water, money, gems, and such. Unfortunately, you can't store spare weapons, armor, or other items, which can later become a problem (more on that in a little while).

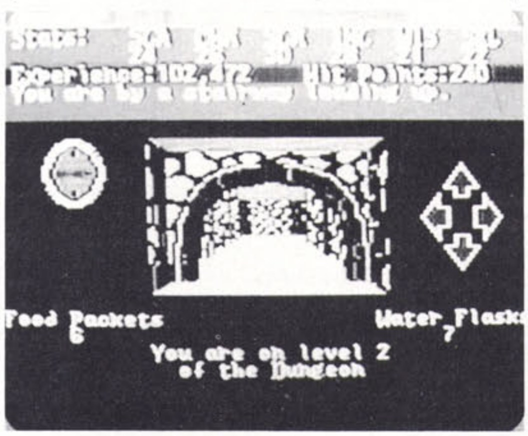
You may belong to the other three guilds as an associate member. They do not provide rings, ring-recharging, or lockers, but they will teach you spells, allow you to practice spells, and also (*Free!*), remove any curses that may have been placed upon you.

Two other places of interest are the Enchantress' and the Dwarven Smithy. The Enchantress (for a set price of eight silvers each item) will tell you all about your weapons and armor. In return for crystals, she will enchant any weapon or piece of armor you wish. Here, you must be very careful.

When an item is to be enchanted, you get a choice of what you want done. The item could be made lighter; its life could be extended (many weapons break after awhile); it could be made to do more damage; or have a new category of damage added to what it already does. These last two may confuse people.

Choosing to "make it more effective" means that the weapon's current damage rating will be raised (e.g. a sword that does low sharp damage would do medium sharp damage). Choosing to "add extra damage capability" means that the weapon would do another kind of damage (e.g. a sword that does low sharp would now do, say, low sharp and low fire). You have *no* choice as to what type of damage ability is added.

The best choice is usually making



a weapon more effective. There is little sense in spending crystals to make weapons or armor lighter, nor would you really want to rely on the judgment of the Enchantress as to what the item needs ("Let me decide what's best" is also on the list.).

An item can only be enchanted once, so be sure you pick what you really want. Also note that, insofar as weapons are concerned, the secondary types of damage they do will never be raised when the item is enchanted. Armor protection, however, will have its various categories raised, if you pay enough.

The Smithy sells quality weapons and armor; buys your old stuff; and will also, for a stiff price, make a custom weapon for you. The custom-made weapons (which you also get to name!), are the best in the game. However, it will take awhile before you can afford one, since the Dwarf accepts only gems and jewels for his wares (but he gives you silver when you sell something). Start collecting the baubles early in the game, and buy a custom weapon (sword or hammer recommended) as soon as you can (by the way, it takes four days, game time, for the weapon to be forged, and you can't do anything at the Smithy during this period).

Note that when you want a weapon made, the Smith will tell you he wants "at least" a certain number of gems and jewels. The more you give him, the more potent your weapon will be. I paid him 300 gems/jewels for my sword, Annihilator. It turned out to be well-named and came out doing high sharp, low blunt, and low good damage and was able to kill most things with one blow, at times doing over 200 points of damage on aimed attacks.

The last important shop is Lucky's Potion Brewery on level two. Here you can buy potions, or have potions you've picked up identified. The prices here are quite reasonable, but perhaps that's because all the potions are temporary, and wear off after time. Lucky may also offer you, at a bargain price, an experimental potion. This is a gamble, since you won't know what it does until you drink it (this is the one potion Lucky won't identify for you); the effects could be good or bad. Take one at your own risk.

Quest for Hire

Sitting in the middle of the first level, just below the Floating Gate, is the Oracle. For a donation in gold (and only gold, minimum of five pieces), he will send you out on little quests. Completing these quests will bring you some information, raise some of your attributes, and allow you to reach level four.

Therefore the basic activities in The Dungeon are mapping and performing the quests. Along the way, you get to pick up a variety of weapons, armor, magic items, crystals, jewels, and other goodies,

(Continued on page 17)

Choppers!

Evan's Fighting Gunships

Reviews by M. Evan Brooks

Helicopter \'hel-ê-käp-ter\ An aeroplane flying machine with a vertical screw arrangement to lift it into the air, and other power apparatus gives it horizontal motion. It has not yet been practically realized, though some experiments have been made. — from *Winston's Cumulative Encyclopedia,* Philadelphia, 1912.



With that working definition firmly in mind (and tongue firmly in cheek), it is time to examine the plethora of helicopter simulations currently available. **Microprose** was one of the first companies to produce such a simulation, (see *CGW #35* (March 1987) for a detailed review of *Gunship*). Gunship was an innovative break-through entry. Do these recent entries forge new ground or merely reshovel used oats?

TITLE:	Infiltrator II
SYSTEM:	C64/Apple/IBM
PRICE:	$29.95
DESIGNER:	Chris Gray
PUBLISHER:	Mindscape, Inc. Northbrook, IL

Perhaps a threshhold question should be framed as to what one expects from a helicopter simulation. *Infiltrator II* is clearly an arcade game, while *Super Huey* approaches the pure flight simulator. *Tomahawk*, to this reviewer, seems closer on the scale to the arcade, with *Thunderchopper* and *Helicopter 3-D* balancing more towards the simulator side.

Each simulation has attempted to reflect own its sense of flight reality. Perhaps, Infiltrator II belongs off by itself. As an arcade-type product, its sense of reality is obviously not accurate or meant to be taken as such. With graphics and game play somewhat reminiscent of *Spy vs. Spy I-II*, Infiltrator II is a continuation, wherein the player must fly his Gizmo DHX-2 into enemy air space, infiltrate an enemy ground installation, seek various objects and eventually, make a brain implant into the enemy leader in order to render him innocuous.

The documentation is *very* tongue in cheek. This is initially fun, but after the first reading, the jokes can become tiresome when one is attempting to find a particular answer.

Overall, however, the program is well done. The graphics are functional, albeit cartoonish, but they clearly convey the necessary information. Game play itself is entertaining as an arcade product, but at the same time, flight mechanics are sufficiently difficult to raise this product above the normal "shoot-'em-up" and the mission sequences are varied. IFF (identification — friend or foe) is an essential survival characteristic, and luck can well play a portion in one's lot when encountering the Unfriendly Skies.

While it is a credible job overall, this reviewer's hesitancy in offering a recommendation is that the product is more difficult than the normal arcade product. Given that difficulty, when compared against the likes of Gunship, it obviously falls short in both realism and replay value. If one is more inclined towards the arcade spectrum, however, Infiltrator II should fill the bill. If one desires a more realistic accounting, then read on . . .

Tomahawk is a simulation of the AH-64 Apache gunship. Covering the same area as Microprose's Gunship, this simulation is easier to operate, albeit much more primitive overall. From the opening sequence, one is quickly made aware that the graphics are primitive. The documentation is adequate, although lacking in sophistication and delineation. It is interesting to observe that Tomahawk and *Mach 2* appear to have been done by the same design staff (though **Firebird**'s *Mach 2* is silent as to the name of its designers).

Unlike most helicopter simulators, Tomahawk has a correcting feature so that if the stick is released, the helicopter will automatically assume a straight heading, no matter what turn mode one is in. While this may assist the novice, it becomes a distraction to the more advanced gamer, given that one has to continually correct for this automatic realignment.

Aside from flight training, scenarios are map oriented, and require one to liberate particular sectors from enemy influence. One may select either day or night missions, as well as determine the cloudbase, crosswinds, and turbulence. These are welcome touches, but overall, this simulation does not approach the sophistication, sense of realism and sheer enjoyment that Gunship offers.

Perhaps, Tomahawk's greatest appeal will be to the Atari 8-bit machine owners. Since Gunship will never appear in that mode, Tomahawk is the only viable sub-

stitution. The simulation offers the Atari version on one side, with the Commodore version on the flip.

Tomahawk does offer cloudbase and turbulence as interesting options, but overall, the simulation is simply not innovative or exciting enough to justify a strong recommendation.

Thunderchopper **ActionSoft**'s response to *Gunship*, just as *Up Periscope* was their response to *Silent Service* (and *Stealth* their forthcoming response to *Stealth Fighter*). Does anyone see a pattern here? Still, Up Periscope was an interesting simulation (cf. *Computer Game Forum* (Fall 1987)) in which the documentation was superb and definitely whetted one's appetite for more. Unhappily, the documentation in Thunderchopper is not up to that standard. The flight instructions are terse and could well be expanded. Furthermore, the historical flavor is bland. This reviewer finds it interesting that Col. Rosenow was an Air Force officer and not Army, since most combat air operations from rotary wing aircraft are currently under Army jurisdiction.

Be that as it may, Thunderchopper lacks the detail and gameplay that Gunship offered. Instead of the Apache we are familiar with from *Gunship*, the aircraft in Thunderchopper is a Hughes 530 MG Defender. The ground terrain is handled somewhat more realistically than in Gunship and the zoom television target monitor is a definite plus. However, the scenarios, while varied, do not offer the sweaty palms that Gunship yielded. Scenarios include flight training, rescue alert and rescue at sea (picking up downed pilots), combat, and armed escort. These scenarios offer a varied view of the role of the helicopter. An interesting flight sidelight is that when one approaches a building, one must beware of updrafts. This condition is a real factor and one which is rarely seen on computer simulations. Overall, though, Thunderchopper lacks the elan and panache that one would have expected.

3-D Helicopter Simulator offers a unique twist that has not appeared heretofore. One can play head-to-head via modem and even write nasty messages to one's opponent as he seeks victory in the skies!

Sierra plans to upgrade the program, as well as offer scenery disks. The program itself offers a somewhat generalized helicopter simulation in a combat environment where one's opponent is a single ship with similar armament and handling characteristics. No Warsaw Pact ground or air targets are offered, but given the use of the 16-bit machines, 3-D Helicopter Simulator does offer graphics which are a cut above the competition. The helicopters themselves are graphically disappointing, appearing somewhat chunky and boxish. The surrounding vistas, however, are wonders to behold. One of the nicest options is the "out-of-body" approach. This enables players to view his craft from groundside, rear or satellite. The most difficult aspect of most 3-D helicopter simulations is landing the helicopter in one piece, given the graphic limitations of the computer and the lack of depth perception in this medium. The different views herein obviate that failing, although in all truth, the experienced gamer may well consider using a ground or satellite view to be "cheating."



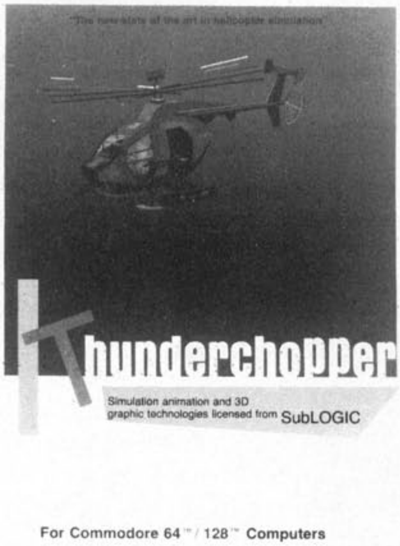
TITLE:	Tomahawk
SYSTEM:	Atari (64K)/C-64
PRICE:	$29.95
DESIGNER:	D.K. Marshall
PUBLISHER:	DataSoft Chatsworth, CA

While 3-D Helicopter Simulator offers an interesting flight experience and a challenging two player modem game, the game is somewhat predictable as a solitaire combat simulator. Those desirous of a product more akin to *Flight Simulator II* will find this program definitely to their liking, but those desiring a true combat simulator will find it a little too dry.

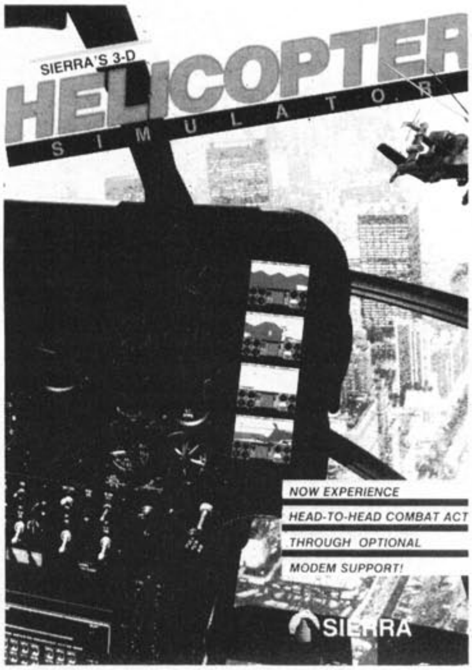
Cosmi's *Super Huey* is an older program, mentioned here for completeness. It is also more of a flight simulator than a combat simulator. With missions of combat, rescue and exploration, the latter is the longest and most difficult scenario. For those desiring an 8-bit helicopter flight simulator, *Super Huey* and its sequels fill the bill. For those desiring excitement as well, it would pay dividends to look elsewhere.

Conclusions

Virtually all of these simulators present a somewhat accurate rendition of rotary flight (of course, they all ignore the pedals, but then again, that type of input would require additional hardware in order to yield its increased dividends in the realism vs. playability trade-off). Microprose's Gunship is obviously the competition to beat. However, Gunship offers an action-oriented realism sorely lacking in all these products. Also, only Gunship offered a keyboard overlay which made flight



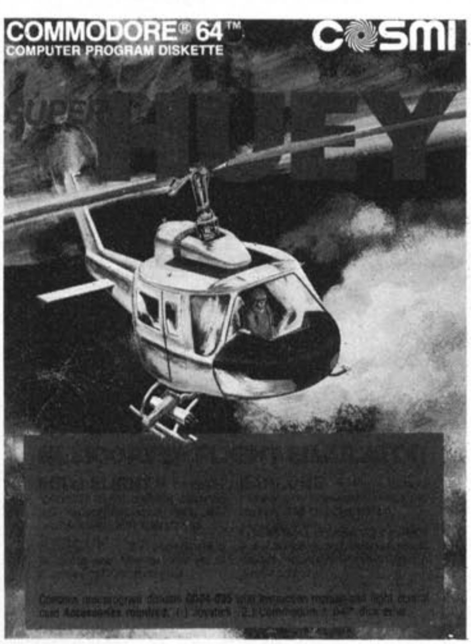
TITLE:	Thunderchopper
SYSTEM:	C-64/Apple/IBM
PRICE:	$29.95
DESIGNER:	Col. John B. Rosenow
PUBLISHER:	ActionSoft Champaign, IL



mechanics easily accessible. These other products, although most offer a separate reference sheet, do not have the ease of use that a keyboard overlay does. Thus, it becomes difficult to remember which key to press at the proper time — a flaw which only repeated playings would obviate.

In reviewing these products, this reviewer is reminded of a Bloom County comic strip, wherein Opus the penguin becomes a film reviewer. As he hunches over the typewriter, his review unfolds " . . . has brought the word 'bad' to new levels of badness. Bad acting. Bad effects. Bad everything. This . . just oozed rottenness . . . . simply bad beyond all infinite dimensions of possible badness." [Pause] "Well maybe not that bad, but Lord, it wasn't good."

TITLE:	3-D Helicopter Simulator
SYSTEM:	IBM/MS-DOSCompatibles
PRICE:	$39.95
DESIGNER:	Joe Wofford
PUBLISHER:	Sierra, Inc. Coarsegold, CA



These individual programs were not that bad. They all have a new or different viewpoint. The problem is that, after Gunship, if something does not simply knock everyone's socks off, there is little justification in publishing it. However, of those products reviewed in this article, this reviewer was most impressed with 3-D Helicopter Simulator because of its modem capabilities and better scenery. Then again, as a sixteen-bit product, such is to be expected.

TITLE:	Super Huey
SYSTEMS:	Atari/C-64
PRICE:	$12.95
DESIGNER:	Paul Norman
PUBLISHER:	Cosmi, Inc. Wilmington, CA

Alternate Reality

(Continued from page 13)

many (but not all) of which are nicely described in the manual.

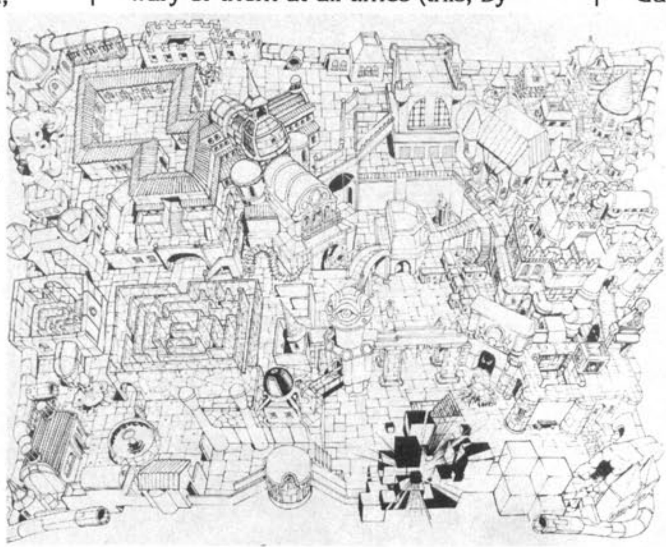
Graphics, especially on the 8-bit Apple, are much improved. Wall boundaries are clearly delineated, making mapping easier, although not less tedious (as before, one step in the game does not equal one square on the map). Pictures of the various beings you encounter are sharp, and many feature minor animation. The sewers are suitably murky in dark blue, and have a slightly claustrophobic atmosphere about them.

Encounters have a variety of outcomes, depending on how you feel about the creatures, and how they feel about you. Some, of course, will always attack. Others may adopt a neutral stance, waiting to see what you will do first. You can try starting a conversation, or offering something from your inventory, in the hopes of obtaining information (which never worked too well for me; I never learned anything useful). Sometimes, a friendly creature will give you something you lack (a compass, a food packet, or such).

You may also find yourself up against multiple monsters of the same type, up to as many as eight (this is where spells really come in useful!). A few of them, including flame demons, goblins, and guards, are able to summon more of the same, so it's essential to kill them off as quickly as possible.

Combat is pretty much the same as in the City, being handled in an all-text manner. You do have the ability to use spells as well as weapons, however, and if worst comes to worst, you can always try running away.

Thieves will plague you throughout the game, sometimes fighting to the death, other times just grabbing something and running off (very irritating). Note that being a member of the Thieves Guild does not necessarily confer immunity from such attacks. My character (evil, of course) was an associate of the Thieves Guild and this did not prevent occasional theft attempts and attacks from other thieves. Master Thieves in particular seem to pay no attention to your guild affiliation, so be wary of them at all times (this, by the way, also holds true for the Mercenaries Guild; associate members may sometimes attack you).


An Overview of the Dungeon in Alternate Reality: The Dungeon

The Importance of Being Honest

The game can be difficult if your character is good, since you have to be very careful of your actions. Fighting the wrong creatures will bring warnings from your guilds and those who do not quickly mend their ways are expelled.

The same is true of evil guilds. If you start acting in too good a fashion, they will be very upset with you and start giving you warnings about that. This happened to me in the game. I came in from the City, and was judged to be evil, as the priest in the Chapel told me. He offered me the chance to repent, and all I had to do was give up *all* my worldly possessions.

Well, I was standing there with four hundred gold in my pocket and there was no way I was going to give up that, plus all my weapons, armor and other goodies, just to make things harder for myself! So, I decided to stay evil and went around and joined all the evil Guilds.

Things were going well until one time I walked into the Dark Wizards Guild and was told they were getting tired of my "holier than thou" attitude. Oops! I was being too good. Time to go out and bash a few paupers; get my soul back to being dark as pitch again (grin). That took care of the problem and as long as I remembered to do an evil act every now and then, I remained a member in good standing of all my guilds.

For all that, the game is not particularly well-balanced. Starting a new character from scratch is almost impossible, unless you already know where some of the good things are, and are lucky enough to get them before being killed. As in the City, attribute generation is totally random and incoherent, and you might have to make many tries before you get a viable character.

Even then, you could find yourself dead before many moves have passed in the game. You rarely get enough money to equip yourself even half-way decently; certainly there won't be enough to obtain all the armor (which now comes in pieces for various body parts) you need, not to mention a weapon or two.

The major dangers at the start are the giant rats and bats, which will frequently cause diseases when they bite you. All you can do in that case is hope a wandering Healer shows up before it's too late. You probably won't have enough money for both being cured and having hit points restored, so you could be undiseased, but low on points, making you dead meat in your next combat.

Thus, it's much better to bring in

an experienced character from the City. However, the armor you had there will now only cover your torso, and you'll have to buy additional armor for your head, arms, and legs at Damon and Pythias from the start. Later, after encounters, you'll find better types of armor that give more protection.

The Ultimate Consumer

The most outrageous aspect of the game is the Devourer. This creature shows up when the game decides you are carrying too many items. It has nothing to do with your strength, simply the number of things in your inventory.

When the Devourer appears, it always surprises you, then goes on to suck up random items from your inventory. Money, jewels, food, water, weapons: anything you have with you could go into its maw, although most of the time it will home in on the best thing you have in weapons or armor.

The creature also attacks you, and many times you will stand there stunned while your inventory vanishes and your hit points go down until you're dead. The thing can be killed, but often not before several valuable items have been lost (the manual does not tell you what triggers the Devourer; you have to discover this by trial and error).

This is one of the most asinine devices I have come across. If the idea is to keep players from carrying around too many goodies and thus becoming unbeatable, then it should be implemented in a more intelligent and logical, not to mention fair, fashion. Limits could easily be imposed, either by strength, or in total number of items regardless of stats. To use a juvenile conception such as the Devourer is just plain poor design.

As before, you save to a separate character disk. Unlike City, however, when you bring in your character for play, it is not entirely wiped from the disk. Instead, it is marked as "Lost". If you should die (or turn off the computer without saving), your character is still there. There's a catch, though. One of your stats will be randomly reduced by one the next time you play.

This is silly. The character disk can be backed up, and of course everyone is going to back up every time they save. When a character dies, it will just be restored from the backup. So why bother with all the folderol of reducing stats? It accomplishes nothing. Far better to just leave the character alone on the disk, as is.

The quest structure in Dungeon is rather loose. Supposedly the Oracle sends you on these little jaunts, but

you can stumble on them by accident and complete them without consulting the Oracle at all. After the first two, I just kept going along on my own, and managed to do all the others without ever hearing about them from the Oracle. This greatly reduces the importance of the Oracle in the game, when it's supposed to be one of the more important aspects. A more cohesive design would have had the quests triggered by visits to the Oracle, instead of just sitting out there to be inadvertently discovered.

Here a word for Apple //c owners: before you boot Dungeon, make sure that the joystick is plugged into the computer. If it isn't, you'll find that the game will spin your character around in circles, making movement or any other action virtually impossible.

Now, a word for all Apple owners: when you go down the stairs from level two to level three, *do not* try to take them back up. This will cause the game to crash! Always use the other stairway (which you have to find) to go back up to level two.

The Alternate Reality Improvement Association

Overall, Dungeon is a big improvement over City, but it is still ultimately unsatisfying. Part of this is due to the scope of the game, spreading out over a total of six scenarios. Until the last one is reached, you're really just marking time in the game. You may be picking up clues and information, but the lack of a definite ending (which isn't possible in this setup) or of some specific accomplishment leaves a hollow feeling when the game is done.

The lack of true puzzles also contributes to this feeling. The quests are pretty straightforward matters and there is generally little mystery about them or their completion. In fact, the most puzzling part of the game is apt to be figuring out what the various goodies do that you pick up.

Perhaps, some of this cannot be helped in a game of such magnitude. Yet, surely the individual scenarios could have a little more meat, depth, and cohesive design to them. There needs to be more positive and meaningful activity in the future scenarios, if the game as a whole is to live up to its ultimate conception.

Bottom line: Better than City, but still too close to treasure-grabbing, hack-and-slash action.

ALTERNATE REALITY: THE DUNGEON

CONTEST RESULTS

Long, long ago in a game magazine far, far away (*Computer Game Forum* #1), a great challenge was issued for the most powerful characters of both alignments (good and evil) to present themselves for recognition. Great wealth (in the form of a complete set of Datasoft products) was to be presented to both champions. Over two hundred challengers vied for these honors. Herein doth lie the results of this tournament.

Champion of the Good

Dragon Slayer - by Tim Patrick
544-C Wailepo Street
Kailua, HI 96734
Computer System - Atari 1200 XL

Dragon Slayer is a level 13 character who has achieved a very high level of sanctity in Alternate Reality: The Dungeon. He has been offered sanctuary from the Chapel Monks and was awarded with St. Percival's Mace and the Spell of Dispell Evil. He wears Enchanted Armour (Helm of Light, Crystal Breast Plate, True Silver Gauntlets and Leggings) and carries three custom made Enchanted Weapons along with St. Percival's Mace. All spells have been mastered to 95% and Dragon Slayer has completed all quests, including the defeat of the Great Wyrm.

Champion of Evil

Orion - by Jeff Towich
1990 Sunset Avenue
Whitehall, PA 18052
Computer System - Commodore 64

Orion is a level 13 character of evil proportions. His primary guild is the Wizards of Chaos. He has killed the Great Wyrm and emptied his lair of all treasure. He has mastered 10 spells to a success level of 95% and wears full Enchanted Armour. Orion wields an Enchanted Ironwood Boken and Mirrored Shield as weapons. He also carries several other Enchanted Weapons. Orion has defeated the Goblin and Troll Kings and delivered the Reforged Ring to the Oracle. Other quests completed include: answering the Gargoyle's riddle, returning the three staff pieces to Acrinimiril, surviving the Gauntlet, and killing the Alien in the Control Room on the fourth level of the Dungeon.

And the scribes of the game magazine did heap praise and congratulations upon the champions. And subscribers to the magazine, in all 50 fiefdoms and 27 foreign kingdoms, cheered the victors!

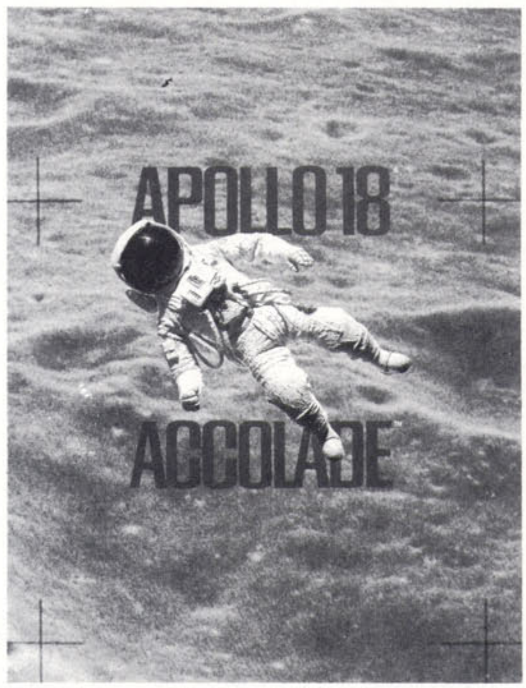
As both an educator and arcade fanatic, David was an ideal choice to help us launch a review on this "historical" action game.

TITLE:	Apollo 18: Mission to the Moon
SYSTEM:	C-64
PRICE:	$29.95
DESIGNERS:	Artech Digital Entertainments
PUBLISHER:	Accolade Cupertino, CA



APOLLO 18

***MISSION TO THE MOON*™**



IT'S ONLY A PIXEL MOON

by David M. Wilson

In 1961, President John Fitzgerald Kennedy set the nation's resources toward sending man to the moon and returning him safely to the earth. In the fast-paced decade that followed, the imagination of the entire world was fixed on the heavens. Every nation watched in awe as Neil Armstrong first stepped on the lunar surface with his now famous statement, "One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind."

I was one of those young men whose hearts swelled with envy as I watched those first moonwalkers (the real ones, not Michael Jackson) frolic on the moon. Now, however, any aspiring astronaut can launch his own moon mission in **Accolade**'s new space simulation game, *Apollo 18*. The game is a faithful attempt to re-create an actual Apollo mission from countdown to splashdown. The game is *not* an arcade game, even though portions of the game operate like one. First of all, the game instructions are packed full of details about how the Apollo flight operations worked; a detailed drawing of the Apollo command/service modules accompanies the game; and the last page of the game pamphlet includes a list of the Apollo manned missions, as well as a bibliography which shows the research which went into this project. The designers encourage players to do extra research and learn even more about the Apollo project.

From first boot, the game has a great sense of realism. The digitized voice on the synthesized "soundtrack" really sounds like those memories of mission control when it says "T minus 15 and holding." The voice sounds so much like the real thing that the first time I failed in a mission (I burned my crew up on reentry) and the voice said, "The Apollo spacecraft and crew have been lost," I was sharply reminded of the loss of the Challenger astronauts.

On Moonlight Way

The mission begins in mission control with a simple setting, checking and re-setting of the operating systems. The game becomes difficult during the launch. Players are responsible for watching a number of gauges and responding to the information given, as well as keeping their timing down to the split second or having the mission scrubbed. The game system gives the player a small margin of error, but the player must keep the craft on course while jettisoning various stages, firing various boosters, and the like. This is not an easy task. This segment of the game will take a lot of practice and players should not become discouraged if they have a hard time getting beyond it and on to the remainder of the game.

Once into orbit, the player ceases to play mission control and becomes the pilot of the space capsule. If he has achieved a safe parking orbit, Houston will allow him to continue on to the moon. If not, you will be forced to go to re-entry and splashdown. Assuming the player's orbit is safe, Houston will order the player to make several course corrections. The on-board computer establishes the proper burn and gives players a mark five countdown to fire the burn. I found that if one holds the fire button down until the scrambled monitor of the on-board computer changes from green to red, one's course correction will be correct from the first burn. If one misses his mark five, fails to hold the fire button down long enough, or holds it down too long, the course correction portion of the game must be repeated. It will also be repeated before landing on the moon.

The next maneuver consists of releasing the lunar module, rotating the service and command modules 180 degrees until the nose of the spacecraft is head to head with the lunar module and docking the two together. Actually, it sounds more difficult than it is. The only arduous part of the docking is to be discriminating in the amount of thrust the player uses to slow his approach to the lunar module. If too much thrust is used, the approach will be completely negated, the player will run low on fuel, and the remainder of the mission scrubbed.

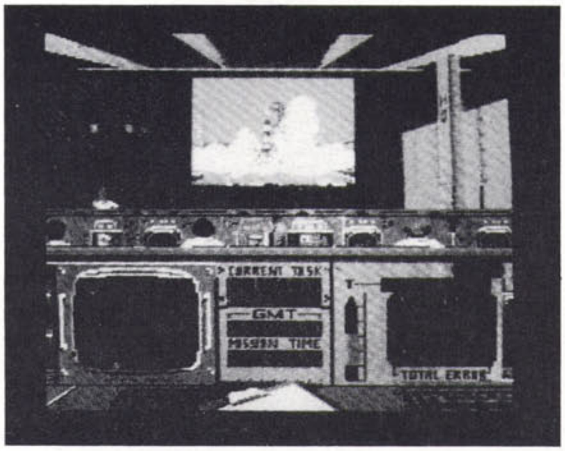
Assuming, however, that the player has docked successfully with the lunar module, he will make mid-course corrections and approach the moon. There will be more course corrections to make as the distance narrows between the craft and the moon, but finally, the big moment arrives.

Now, players are ready to land the lunar module by use of a visual monitor and a command monitor. The object of this sequence is to set the craft down at the slowest velocity possible. If one does not bring the vehicle down at the first landing site, there are two alternative sites. Once again, players should be cautioned not to use too much fuel on the first approach or the mission is scrubbed without making a lunar landing. Upon making a safe landing with the lunar module's systems operating properly, the astronauts will be given a "Go" for the moonwalk.

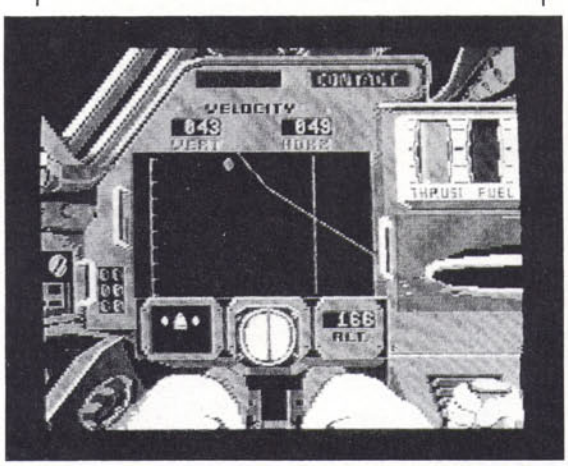
The Man on the Moon

With the lunar module depressurized and the hatches open, players begin their walk on the moon. The mission is to stay on the path and conduct a "locomotion" experiment. In reality, the rationale for this experiment was to allow astronauts to learn how to move around on the moon in case of a solar-flareup so that they could return to the safety of the lunar module quickly. Players must stay on the course which leads from the lunar module to the landing site of Surveyor III, an early unmanned mission which landed on the moon in April of 1967. On one of the actual moon landings, the lunar module landed only 600 feet away from the Surveyor, so the astronauts did not have far to go.

Then, the fun really begins. The player blasts off from the moon,



tracks the command module on radar, aligns itself with the command module, and docks with it. Inside the command module, players initiate the return home sequence.



On the way home, players stop for a short spacewalk (EVA - extra-vehicular activity). Three satellites are released from the spacecraft. The astronaut must catch the released satellites and stabilize them. He must be careful, though. Too much thrust from the jetpack will cause the player to overshoot the satellite entirely and have to work his way back. The player uses a grappling stick to ensnare the satellite, but it is no easy chore.

The Re-entry Craft

After the EVA sequence, players complete final course corrections and prepare for re-entry. The player must manually set the re-entry angle and do his best to hold it as steady as possible during re-entry. One can never hold the cross-hairs perfectly straight on the re-entry angle display, but one should just keep hauling them over to the center of the display and try to hold them there, despite the excessive vibration caused from re-entering the atmosphere. If one enters the atmosphere without burning up, the next step is firing the "'chutes" and coasting in for a smooth landing as mission control says, "We've got you spotted, the carrier is one its way!" or "Re-entry must've been a real rough ride. You guys are way off course." On board the carrier, the smiling astronauts are treated to a rousing rendition of the national anthem and are congratulated on a job well done.

Moonglow

The game is another one of those well-put together games that teaches without preaching. One cannot even read the instruction booklet without learning about the Apollo project. If reality-based simulations are exciting to you, this game belongs on your game shelf. If you like games with a great variety of segments, this would be a good choice. Every time one plays it, it is slightly different because the game rates one's performance by percentages, not by points. Players may even compare their ratings with the ratings the designers' have given to the historical Apollo astronauts. One thing is for sure, gamers who spend their money on this game will not spend their time in the light of the silvery moon or moonlighting, they will be at their computers.

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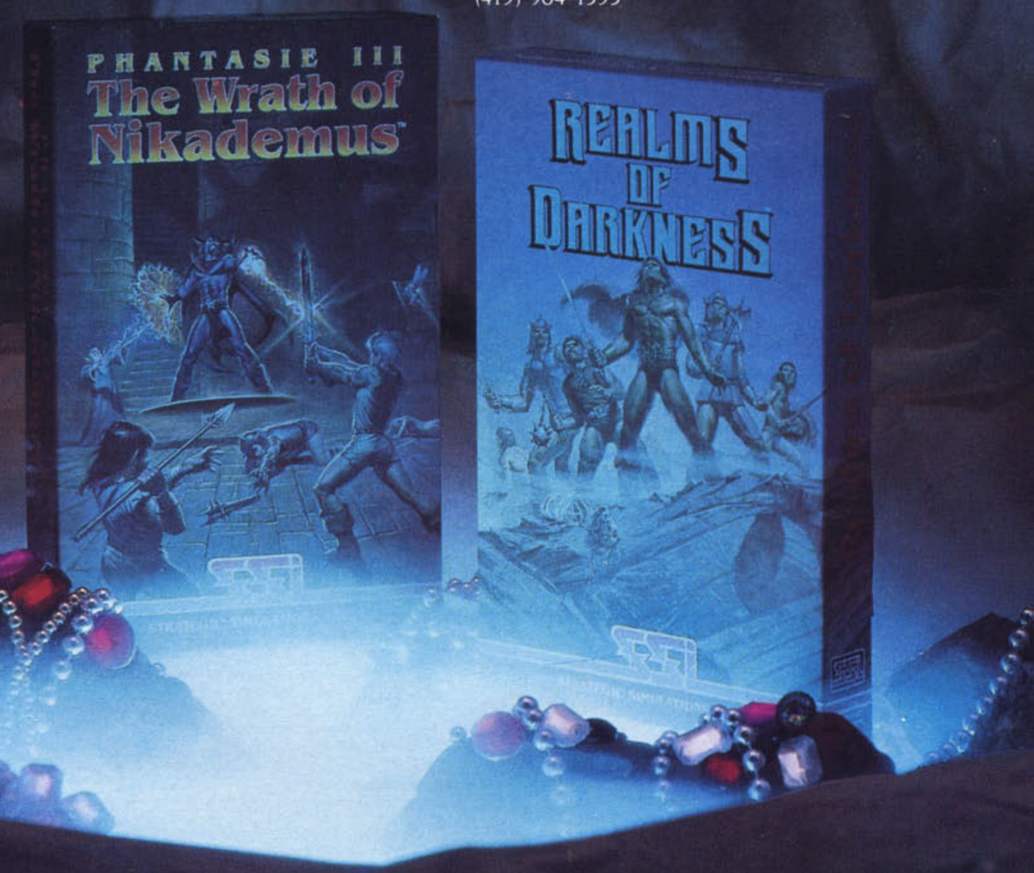
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JEWELS OF DARKNESS

by Douglas Seacat

In his initial review for CGW, *Doug suggests that Firebird's trilogy of classic games may be flawed.*

TITLE:	Jewels of Darkness
SYSTEMS:	Atari 8-bit, C-64 ($24.95) Amiga, IBM, ST ($29.95)
DESIGNER:	Mike, Nick, and Pete Austin
PUBLISHER:	Firebird Waldwick, NJ

Ah, the good old days of interactive fiction! Who cannot remember the days of the two-word parser, the short descriptions, and the ridiculously small vocabularies of early adventure gaming? In *Jewels of Darkness*, an inexpensive combination of three "classic" adventures, **Firebird** gives us the chance to relive those days. However, remember, the product is dated (and is priced accordingly).

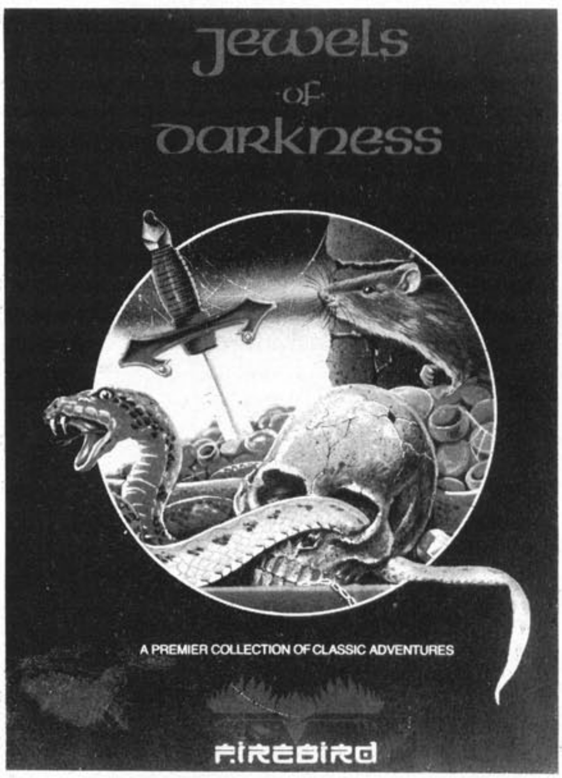
New and Improved with Secret Ingredients

Reading the back of the package, one receives the impression that the game includes several bold, classic adventures with which to spend many hours of fun. The game even promises that these games have been "significantly revised to incorporate the latest innovative techniques." How exciting!

How untrue!

The game does include "Colossal Adventure," which will seem very familiar to veteran players. It is a classic text adventure game which is basically a treasure hunt set in a magical atmosphere. The player must wander about dungeons, mazes, and caves in a search for diamonds, gold nuggets, and other pleasing items (sound familiar yet?), while at the same time, avoiding evil and helping good. The other two games, "Adventure Quest" and "Dungeon Adventure" follow along much the same line, with a few plot changes and some differences in locale. For example, in the second game, you must destroy an evil lord. In the third, you must return to the lord's dominion to find more treasure. While I have never played the original versions of "Adventure Quest" and "Dungeon Adventure," "Colossal Adventure" seems to be a true remake of the original game, with only small alterations. All in all, too few alterations.

The game has added a few things that weren't present in the original



all-text games: graphics, a more complete text parser, and some new commands. Unfortunately, the first two additions leave something to be desired. The C-64 graphics are crudely done, take a while to draw onto the screen, and rarely have more than four or five colors. Other computer versions may be better, but from the screen shots of the Amiga version, I seriously doubt it. In several instances, I had the feeling that the artist hadn't even read the room descriptions. This was all the more disappointing since previous text adventures by Firebird (*Guild of Thieves, The Pawn*) have had very fine graphics. Fortunately, moves can be entered before the graphics are finished being displayed or the graphics can be obviated entirely, but the text descriptions aren't much better.

The parser wasn't impressive either. While it is a definite improvement over the two-word version that plagued the original game, it is not nearly as flexible as those used in either The Pawn or Guild of Thieves. Full sentences can be entered, but the vocabulary of the game is so limited that a few words are about all you will be able to use anyway. There were also several curious quirks in the play-system. For example, when I tried to use the word "put" in a sentence, the game replied with "I'm sorry, but I don't understand the word 'putting.'" It was bad enough that it didn't know the word, but a game should never *create* words that it does not understand.

Some of the new commands, however, were interesting and full of possibilities, even if the game isn't. *Ram Save* and *Ram Restore* were definite lifesavers, allowing one to use the game with absolutely no disk-access. Further, the *Oops* option comes in handy in certain areas. Such options can hardly be termed "the latest innovative techniques," however.

Contains Oddities and Artificial Perversities

The puzzles and story-line also leave much to be desired. The game-play is very uneven in that most of the puzzles are ridiculously easy, while several of them are extremely difficult (mainly because

(Continued on page 26)

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Jewels of Darkness

(Continued from page 23)

they are illogical). Personally, I enjoy a game that offers difficult puzzles, but such puzzles should, at least, make sense. There is one location in the game where there is a broad cavern which cannot be jumped, yet one must reach the other side in order to continue the game. What does one do to solve the puzzle? A black rod must be waved which, in turn, causes a crystal bridge to span the opening. What hat did they pull that out of? Still, with persistence and a lot of trial and error, the game can easily be conquered.

Basically, there are only a few rules to follow. The player should keep in mind that there are few red herrings in the game, so almost every item has a use somewhere. For most puzzles, the obvious will do (if you find a dried plant and you have some water, pour the water on the plant, etc.). If the obvious doesn't work, do something completely crazy or illogical and that may work. Also, the game has quite a few locations, so an accurate map is vital.

Experienced adventurers will find the puzzles too easy to be challenging and the crude parser and primitive graphics a distraction to the gaming experience. Novices might get more challenge from the puzzles, but will quickly become frustrated with the sparse descriptions and limited vocabulary.

Original Formula

Still, despite the many problems related to Jewels of Darkness, the game isn't completely bad. Many of the problems related to the story and puzzles stem from the fact that this was one of the first of its type. The authors who originally worked on it didn't have years of previous experience and example to follow in writing their stories. In addition, many of the facets which made the original version popular remain. Some of the locations are quite ingenious, or even humorous. Further, it is interesting to note how much of the game was copied in later adventures by different companies. Many of the old stand-bys which modern players take for granted have their origin, here. If you are interested in the genesis of adventure gaming and don't have much money to spend, this three-game combination certainly would be hard to beat.

The game illustrates the positive progress in game design by means of its faults. Much innovation and accomplishment has occurred since this game was first published, and I, for one, am glad.


KDN-02



Spectrum Holobyte's F-16 Fighter Simulation

Reviewed by Regan Carey

The General Dynamics F-16 is one of the most versatile high performance military aircraft in use today. For example, the USAF Aerial Demonstration Team, the Thunderbirds, uses the F-16. Now, you can try out the Fighting Falcon for yourself.

Talk to your crew chief and select your armament load. You wanted AIM 9 Limas, but they're on back order! Oh, well. Be careful that you don't overdo it, or you'll be flying a brick. Now, climb into the cockpit and buckle in. Engage the Jet Fuel Start and the engine starts to roar. Increase the throttle to full military power. Disengage the wheel brake and you're off down the runway. Cut in the afterburners. Your ears ring as the roar increases. Pull back on the stick--gently! Look over your shoulder and you can see your airbase fade into the distance.

TITLE:	Falcon
SYSTEMS:	IBM, Mac
PRICE:	$49.95
DESIGNERS:	Gilman Louie Mark Johnson
PUBLISHER:	Spectrum Holobyte Alameda, CA

Spectrum Holobyte's new F-16 simulator is, from my personal perspective, one of the most detailed and accurate flight simulators on the microcomputer market today. The software is accompanied by a 140 page manual that provides extensive detail on the care and feeding of an F-16. You are taken from the basics of flying all the way through to complicated maneuvering.

Luckily for the non-pilots among us, *Falcon* has a number of "reality" levels. They range from the magic aircraft of the 1st Lt level that virtually ignores gravity, never crashes and never runs out of fuel or ammo, to the highly sensitive Full Colonel level that is a challenge to all except true fighter jockeys.

A full range of armaments is available. Air to air combat is carried out with AIM-9J/L Sidewinders, and the



M61-A1 Vulcan internal gun. Mavericks, Mk 84 low drag bombs, and Durandal Anti-runway bombs are used for air to ground attack. The ALQ-131 ECM pod makes survival a little easier on air to ground missions.

Views are available out the front, rear and both sides of the cockpit. Ah yes, the cockpit. The graphic rendition of the cockpit is highly detailed and matches a real F-16 cockpit in most major points (see photograph provided courtesy of General Dynamics Corporation). A variety of Heads Up Displays (HUD) are presented, depending on the armament currently selected. Again, Falcon scores well for accuracy. The simulated HUDs are quite close to the real thing.

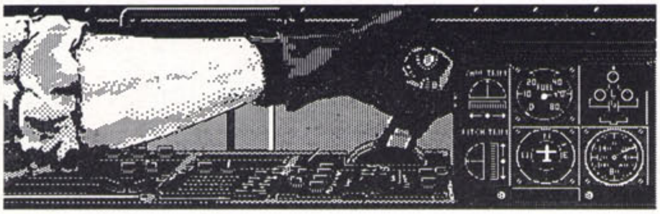
A "black box" feature records the maneuvers of your Falcon and, if applicable, the MiG that was being engaged. The dogfight can then be played back with three simultaneous views of the action-- top, side and front. Analyzing your successes, and failures, can help you to survive in a hostile sky.

To be sure, the sky *is* hostile. You face MiGs in the air and SAMs from the ground. Up to three MiGs can be flying against you at one time. However, if too much is going on the smoothness of the graphic display can be affected. The designers recommend that the full complement of three MiGs only be used on micros with the faster processors, such as the Mac II or the 386 series.

One of the more innovative and exciting features of this software is the capability to support simultaneous play between two micros that are hooked together with a null modem cable, letting two hotshots fly against each other. I haven't tried to fly in a cooperative mode yet, so I don't know if it's possible. It sure would be nice to know I've got a wing man when I engage, though.

The Right Stuff

Frankly, I was impressed by the product, . . . but what do I know? So, I asked a real F-16 driver



Cockpit View To The Left

from the 474th Tactical Air Wing (Nellis AFB) to give Falcon a whirl. His initial skepticism was replaced with interest as the Mac version progressed. Soon he was flying about with a large chip on his shoulder, just looking for a target.

While he was able to point out a number of compromises that the designers had made with reality, he liked the program overall and gave it good marks for accuracy. He was even able to coach me through a couple of maneuvers that I had previously been unable to pull off. The problems had been with my flying, not with the software.

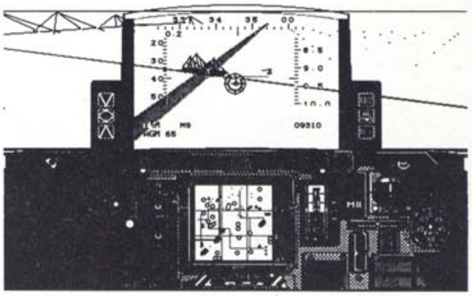
Mac vs. IBM

What's the difference? Basically, the Mac has sound and the IBM has color, but there are other differences that originate with the basic capabilities of the equipment involved. Falcon is one of the few recreational programs on the market today that truly uses the capability of the Macintosh. With the faster processor, the Mac version is smoother and has more detail. I guess you can tell something from the fact that the IBM version comes on a single 360K disk and the Mac version comes on two 700K disks!

The digitized sound on the Mac version is the best that I have heard in a game to date. The opening screen provides an upbeat treatment of Wagner's "Flight of the Valkyries," using some of the sound effects from the game as part of the musical score. Detailed sound adds spirit to the play. Missile launches sound like missile launches and machine guns sound like machine guns. When you start your engine, you hear a jet engine start. What more can I say?

As well, the Macintosh version provides a series of air combat practice maneuvers. Select the maneuver that you'd like to try and suddenly you are in a dogfight against a MiG, and you *need* that maneuver to get him! Talk about motivation for practice. Your Soviet opponent is also miraculously trailed by a series of windows that show you his direction of flight.

The IBM version has a slower keyboard response, so the controls aren't as responsive as they could be. In addition, the resolution of the color display actually cuts down on the quality of the detailed graphics of the cockpit. Otherwise, flying is essentially the same. The Mac version doesn't have the two machine option in place yet, but a free upgrade will be available to registered owners when the new version is released this spring. Both versions can be copied for backups or for installation on a hard disk.

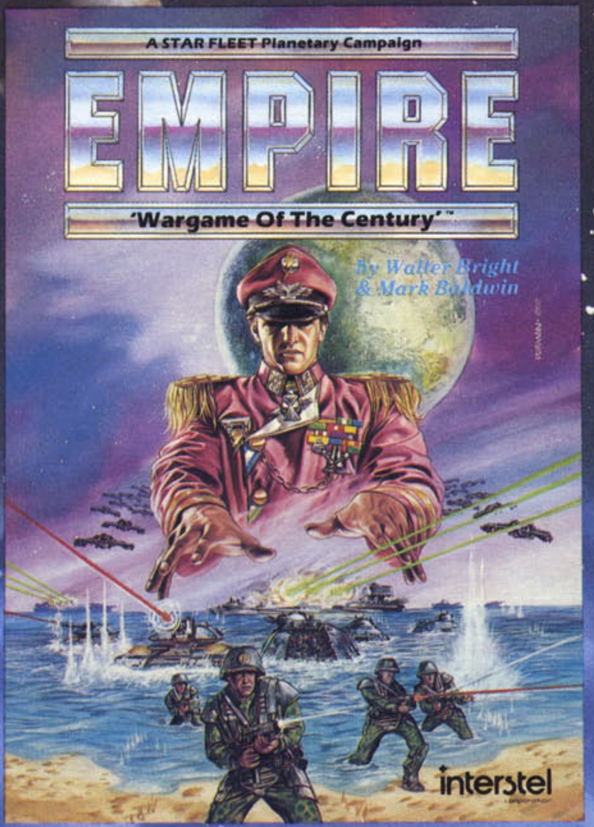


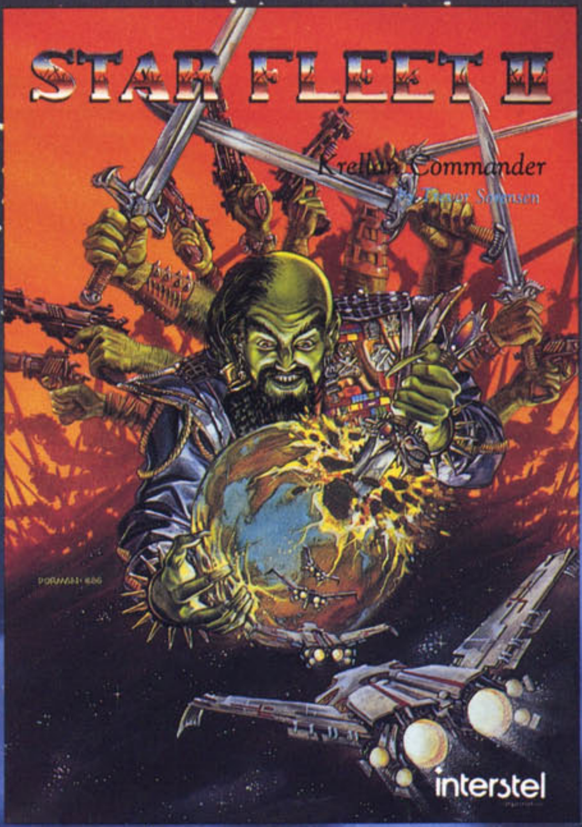
Cockpit View With Target In Sight

Reporting for Duty

Unfortunately, like Spectrum Holobyte's other offerings, Falcon is limited to a pretty small piece of real estate. At Mach 2 it is easy to suddenly find yourself off the edge of the world. Nevertheless, the bottom line is that Falcon is a worthwhile addition to your software collection, assuming you like flight simulators. It takes hours of practice to develop skill at flying, let alone combat, but the hours will fly by, pun intended.

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WARPED IN SPACE!



"Breakout" of a Space Trap with Arkanoid!

by Roy Wagner

Our former "Commodore Key" columnist takes us on a tour of a space-age arcade game in this short review.

TITLE:	Arkanoid
SYSTEM:	Amiga
PRICE:	$49.95
DESIGNERS:	Chris Chirogene Rick Ross Joe Sleator Eric Reinhart
PUBLISHER:	Discovery Software Annapolis, MD

Arkanoid comes to the **Amiga** under license from **Taito**, producer of the arcade version of the game. On the Amiga, it is a perfect version of the arcade game. It has playability that is lacking in *most* all other home computer arcade like games. It has amazing graphics, play action and stereo sound. It is *incredible*!

All 33 levels are loaded into RAM thus eliminating disk access during play. You can begin on any screen from level one to twenty. If you haven't seen this very popular arcade game before, it is somewhat like the old game of *Breakout*. You hit a ball with a moving horizontal "paddle" bar at the bottom of the screen to knockout a wall of bricks worth various point values. In Arkanoid, the concept is the same except that the bricks are now in various challenging patterns. In addition, floating obstacles descend from the top of the play area to the bottom and affect the play action of your ball.

When some bricks are hit, they will release a capsule that falls to the bottom of the screen. Hitting these capsules with your paddle provides you with additional powers. These include slowing down the speed at which your ball moves, catching the ball to provide greater control, an expanded paddle size (making it easier to hit the ball), a disruption that splits the single ball into three active balls, laser fire that will destroy bricks, an extra paddle, and a "break" in the wall that lets you go immediately to the next level.

You start with three paddles and can get additional ones with paddle capsules and for every 20,000 points. You lose a paddle if the ball goes past your paddle. When all your paddles are gone, the game asks for another "quarter." Although your score is reset to zero, you can begin again at the same level where play ended. This is one feature that has been left out of far too many games. Too many games frustrate the player by requiring one to begin again from the start (*Marble Madness* and *Barbarian*, both excellent arcade-style games, have this fault.). By giving you a chance to start at a designated level and to begin again from where you left off, the less adept player or player that just can't make it by a particular situation in the game has a fighting chance. Everyone is more willing to try again and again until they get it.

The game also begins with an arbitrary Top Score board. With any reasonable score, you can add your initials to the board. However, the scores cannot be saved to disk. I usually prefer to see a game save the top scores to disk. This one got me to thinking about this preference. I realized that while everybody likes to see their initials on the list, after a while the new and less capable players never stand a chance to put their name on the list. By not saving the top scores, just like at the arcades, everyone can get their name on the board when the game is first started. If you want to keep track of your top score, just put a sticker on the disk or game container and write that score on it when you finish playing. *[Ed.: By not saving the top scores to disk, the game also avoids the Amiga virus (see The Rumor Bag in this issue).]*

This game has great sustaining play value. Since you can continue playing at a given level, it is easy to keep on playing. When I first booted the game, I played for three straight hours. I started at level 1 and played on to level 28. I didn't even know how tired I was until I pressed the "Pause"key ("Space Bar") and left the room to watch some TV. A little over an hour later, I came back and went on to reach the final 33rd level. The last level is the only one from which you cannot continue playing. It is a vicious level in which you are under attack and once your paddles are gone, you are back to the beginning again. This is quite a game. Some simple skill, luck, and time is all you need for some very enjoyable, yet challenging play.

ALL THE SCREEN'S A STAGE:

The Interactive Screenplay as a Performance Medium

by Jim Gasperini

A co-author of Star Trek: The Promethean Prophecy, *Jim Gasperini, shares some insights about creating fictional worlds for text adventures.*

I sometimes have trouble explaining to people exactly what it is that I do. "What kind of software do you write?" they ask. "Well," I have to say,"it goes by many names, all clumsy and inadequate." The terms, "adventure game" or "computer game," do not manage to communicate the potential I see here for the development of a new genre of narrative. On the other hand, "interactive fiction" or "computer novel" come off as either pretentious posturing or clumsily confusing metaphor.

Experiencing one of these programs is quite unlike experiencing a novel. It is closer, actually, to a form of drama. Since the reader is asked to play a role while looking continually at a screen, the ideal term would be "screenplay." Unfortunately, another industry has about a fifty year claim on that word, so I have to fall back on yet another mouthful: "interactive screenplay."

In a good interactive screenplay, the roles of actor and audience begin to blur. The "audience" finds itself on stage in something more like an improvisational workshop than a finished production. One is given the general outline of a character and told to improvise. The spotlight is on the audience, now, as players wander about the stage imagining the things you should say and do to stay in character.

The software provides not only the stage, but also the set, the props, the other characters, and also, in a peculiar way, the director for this theatrical exercise. Stay in character and have the wit to solve the requisite puzzles and one's performance will be well-received within the restricted imaginary world. Slip out of it and the consequences will range from total indifference to death itself. In *Star Trek: The Promethean Prophecy*, part of the reader's job is to act as much like Captain Kirk as possible. If he should do something odd, like set his phaser to overload, his officers grow alarmed at the risk he is taking. If he does something Kirk would never do, like attempt to shoot Doctor McCoy, an officer steps in to admonish him. If he repeats the attempt, Mister Spock may relieve him of command and the reader finds himself pacing in a narrow room, while the mission proceeds without him.

Who really controls Kirk? The reader inhabits a hollow protagonist. That is, at times, Kirk's mind is his mind, but at others, the captain's range of choices is already set, so he has merely to discover them. Sometimes, it may feel like one of those robot gloves a NASA technician dons to control the mechanical arms of a space probe a million miles away. Yes, there is freedom of movement, but within a decidedly circumscribed range.

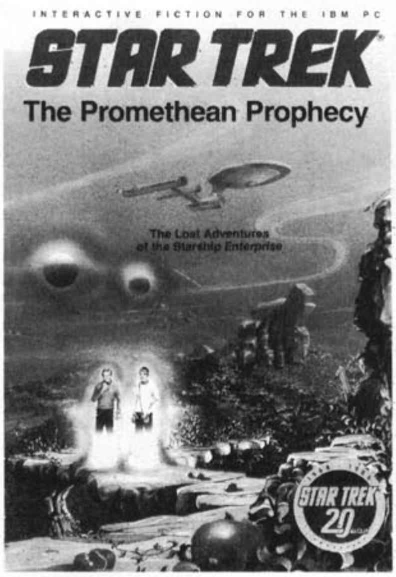
In fact, the free choice one has when playing Kirk is largely an illusion. For the most part, the authors of interactive screenplays are as firmly in control of their actor/readers as the authors of more conventional plays. Sometimes, the authors give them great control over the story; sometimes they thrust their readers up against clearly defined limits; and at others, they set them up in control, only to let spring a *deus ex machina* (this time, quite literally "in the machine.")

As authors, we use all sorts of tricks to create this illusion of control. Suppose a player/actor is wandering around the U.S.S. Enterprise, for example, and finds himself in the hallway on Deck Seven. The room description tells him that, from here, he can go aft into the turbolift, fore into the transporter room, or starboard into engineering. "Hmmm," some players will inevitably say. "Fore, aft, and starboard . . . how about if I try going to port?" Now, *we* didn't have the time and the *computer* didn't have the memory to create the entire Enterprise. In fact, most of the story takes place on the planet Prometheus IV, so we only needed to set up a small part of the starship. How, therefore, were we to handle the people who might try to explore the rest of it?

We set up a kind of optical illusion. If characters say "PORT" when there is no room set up to port, a paragraph will appear on the screen reading something like:

"You stride purposefully down the labyrinthine corridors, passing storage areas, crew's quarters and mess halls. Crewmen bustling past, stiffen a little when they notice their Captain. You ignore them, brooding over the perplexing problems facing the ship. You soon find yourself

back in front of the turbolift." Despite what the lines say, the character has not really left the hallway at all. The next time he tries going offstage, a different message plays, making it clear that he is not really going to get anywhere if he keeps it up. The effect, I hope is like that of a backdrop on a stage, a painting of birch trees fading off into the distance to give the audience the illusion of Chekhovian surroundings. Now that the actor is also audience, he is given enough of the Enterprise as is needed for the story to be presented, and the rest is all matte paintings and *trompe l'oeil* backdrops *[Ed.: The term refers to a type of artwork designed to literally, "deceive the eye." Don't worry if you didn't know, we had to look it up, too.]*. As we accept stagings that are less than perfectly realistic, so we may accept such effects in the setting of the computer game.



We are actually doing the player a favor, here. We try to suggest as elegantly as possible, "Don't bother trying to do that; it is not important to the story." It would have been easy enough to create endless chains of rooms where nothing ever happens, but I find games that do that to be somewhat boring. We tried to make the world of *Star Trek* as dense and rich as possible, with a lot of different things going on in the background of a relatively small world, rather than spreading the important events out all over a largely empty map.

In the original T.V. show, whenever Kirk passes through the corridors of the Enterprise, anonymous members of the crew can be seen bustling back and forth in the background. To simulate this, we used a technique we call "scramblers." Whenever you are in the hallway, there is a random chance that one of a number of messages will play about crewmen hustling past. Sometimes, they are described as intently busy with their tasks and sometimes, they are nervous about how well they are doing their jobs in the presence of their captain.

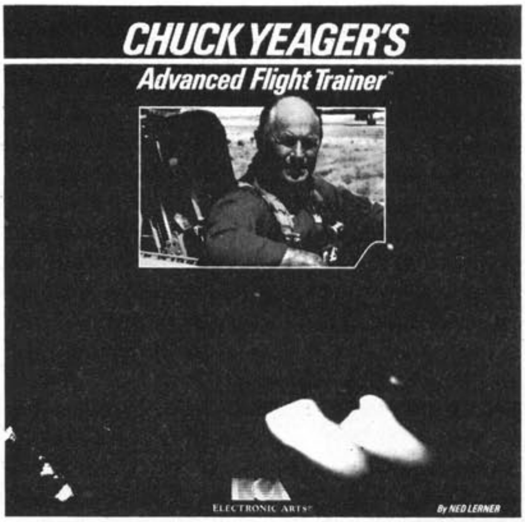
If the scenes on the Enterprise had been more important, we could have elaborated this technique, like we did to create "background" Promethean characters wandering around the planet. There, we took one character, and gave it various faces: "an old blue-eyed Promethean," "a young female Promethean carrying a broom," "a young boy whose robe is a little bit too big for him." Then, we added randomized bits of text describing the character in more detail, and finally, a text from a third pool describing what actions they take: "walks by, chanting something unintelligible," "glances at you briefly before hurrying on her business," and so forth. Putting the three kinds of text together creates a reasonably effective crowd of passersby, kind of like those picture books for kids that show a different animal on each page, divided in three, so you can flip the parts and create various sorts of chimeras: lion's head, pig's middle, bird's feet, etc. Combined, interwoven, and layered on top of each other, these sorts of tricks can provide the illusion of an interestingly diverse and changeable "stage" for you to strut and fret your hours upon.

The range of characters which "interactive fiction" has so far presented for players to impersonate is quite small, especially when compared with other forms of drama. Remember, though, other genres of narrative have had hundreds and in some cases, thousands of years to develop their enviably varied tricks of stagecraft. Someday, perhaps, we will develop something similar. The epic tradition may be abandoned entirely, exchanged for stories focusing on the ambiguities of performance, amounting to actual differences in meaning. Perhaps, there will be room enough in the future for the interactive roles one plays to mirror the difference between Olivier's interpretation of Hamlet, say, and Kevin Kline's . . . between Dustin Hoffman as Willy Loman and Lee J. Cobb in the same role.

We are a long way from that, admittedly. The gap between the role of Captain of the Enterprise and that of Prince of Denmark may ultimately prove unbridgeable (no pun intended). In the meantime, though, we can have fun seeing where these imaginary productions take us. All the screen's a stage, after all, and each of us play many parts.



NAME:	Chuck Yeager's Flight Trainer
SYSTEM:	IBM, C64, Apple
PRICE:	C64 $34.95 Others$39.95
DESIGNER:	Ned Learner
PUBLISHER:	Electronic Arts San Mateo, CA



A rose by any other name would smell as sweet. Such also is the case of *Chuck Yeager's Advanced Flight ~~Simulator~~ Trainer*. Released last July as *Chuck Yeager's Advanced Flight Simulator*, Electronic Arts changed the name to *Chuck Yeager's Advanced Flight Trainer*. Why? SubLogic of Champaign IL, manufacturers of "Flight Simulator II", expressed their opinion that the term "Flight Simulator" was their protected title. Rather than become embroiled in a legal battle over the term, EA decided it would be more efficient to market the game under a new name.

That minor bit of turbulence aside, "Yeager" has been a top gun performer for the San Mateo based software company. The "game" went SPA "Gold" quickest of any Electronic Arts title (in a little over three months of sales). Karen Janowski, Marketing Director of EA's Entertainment Division, feels that the title will go "Platinum" (250,000 sales) sometime in 1988. That's a lot of flight trainers!

The simulation features three levels of onscreen instruction from Yeager. Level one teach basic flying skills such as takeoffs and landings; level two teaches advanced maneuvers such as aileron rolls and hammerhead stalls. On level three the student learns acrobatic stunts and formation flying.

The program also contains a Test Pilot option that allows the player to actually explore the "edge of the envelope" of various aircraft (both historical and unknown experimental craft).

But the favorite option around the CGW offices is the Airplane Racing option. You choose your plane and take it over one of six different race courses. The computer records your competitors. But what makes this option especially exciting is that your prior performance (if other than a last place finish) is exactly recorded (every movement, every turn)and becomes one of your "competitors" in the next race. Not only are you trying to better your own time, you can watch yourself in action from the prior race(s).

Electronic Arts is also working with Chuck Yeager on *Chuck Yeager's Combat Trainer* which will be ready before the end of 1988 (IBM initially with others to follow).

Flightstick™ To The Maxx™



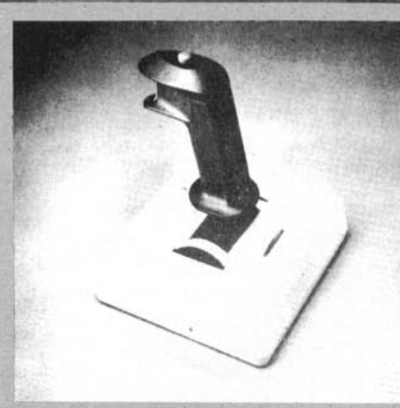
Two products that will be of special interest to computer flight simulator/trainer fans are **MAXX** from Alturas Corporation and **FlightStick** from CH Products.

Alturas has become a member of the growing list of Electronic Arts Affiliated Labels. Their **MAXX** control yoke represents the first hardware peripheral distributed by Electronic Arts. Randy Thier, Director of Affiliated Labels at EA describes the MAXX yoke as a control device for computers which adds to the realism of being in the driver's seat when playing computer auto racing, submarine, helicopter, space and flight simulations.

Thier added that "with the MAXX yoke, first person simulation on a personal computer has never been more real".

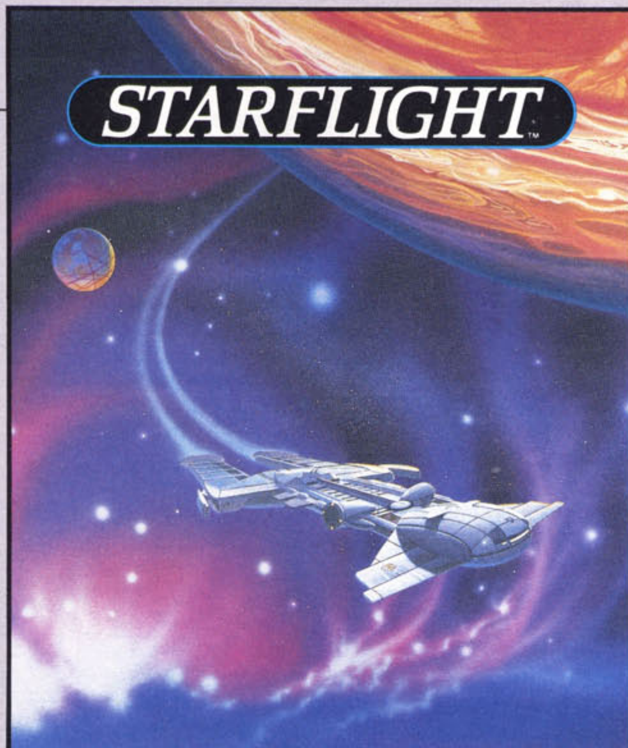
The MAXX yoke does indeed enhance the realism of simulation software. MAXX has been released for the IBM and will be available shortly for the Tandy and Apple II systems. The suggested retail price is $129.95.

If the $129.95 price tag is a bit steep for your budget, or if you prefer a more joystick oriented flight controller you might consider CH Products **Flightstick**. Priced at $74.95 for the Apple version and $79.95 for the IBM version, Flightstick adds a new level of realism to your experience s in computer flying. We like it.



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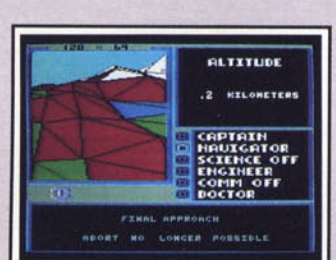
Your navigator zeroes in on a red dwarf star. Long-range scans show three planets: a gas giant, a frozen ice world, and a blue-oceaned paradise that looks just like heaven. A good place to land.

Suddenly a klaxon sounds. "Captain, we're being scanned," says your Science Officer. A giant hologram of a squid-like creature appears on your view screen and hisses, "Prepare to die, air-breathers."

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EARLY BIRD C.E.S. NOTES



Strategic Simulations gave us a sneak preview of their Advanced Dungeons and Dragons product line.

Author Tom Clancy (right) and game designer Sid Meier discuss Microprose's RED STORM RISING computer game with CGW. Clancy, author of the best selling book upon which the game is based, says that the game will be the benchmark of modern nuclear submarine games for years.





The rotunda entry to the sprawling Las Vegas Convention Center. CES takes up all four halls of the Convention Center as well as the exhibit halls of the Hilton, Riviera, and Sahara Hotels.



Ninetendo made a big impression at the show with a huge display area that included demonstrations by more than twenty vendors.



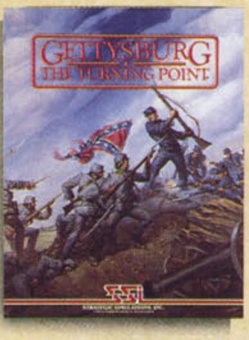
"Soon. Real soon!" says Richard Garriott (aka Lord British) on the left as he discusses the latest anticipated release date for Ultima V with CGW Editor Russell Sipe (center) and Asst. Editor Johnny Wilson (far right).

Origin Systems Staffer John Fachini (Celtics Jacket) and Omnitrend's Tom Carbone (looking to the right) take it all in.



Electronic Arts's Bing Gordon discusses their JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL game with Johnny Wilson.

The *CGW* staff just returned from the Winter Consumer Electronics Show at press time. Current trends in game design and appearance include: options in terms of cinematic perspectives; use of automapping in adventure games, improving graphics on most machines, and more effective use of sound routines (particularly on the more powerful machines). We are excited about the potential of many of the products under development and will be sharing more in our formal report (March, 1988). These products include: **Three-Sixty**'s *Harpoon*, based on the boardgame and described in this issue's *Rumor Bag*; **Infocom**'s new *Infocomics* line which features graphic stories where the reader chooses the viewpoint through which he/she will observe the story rather than text games (with the intent of reaching non-gamers); **Electronic Arts**' *John Madden Football* for the Apple II (64K) with its phenomenal in-depth approach to NFL football (you will not believe this is an Apple game); **Strategic Simulations**' first of seven planned *Advanced Dungeons and Dragons* products, based on the *Forgotten Realms* world and featuring peripheral vision and open spaces along with the familiar adventure game action windows; **Broderbund**'s *Arcade Game Construction Kit* for those who have always wanted to design their own "shoot-'em-up"s, climbing-jumping games, and maze chases; **Cinemaware**'s hilarious *Three Stooges* game which features the digitized voices of the actual stooges, as well as arcade sequences based on the movies themselves; **Omnitrend**'s beautiful foray into fantasy adventures with *Paladin* on the Amiga; **Mindscape**'s *Citadel*, an adventure game on the Macintosh with a unique approach to the command interface from earlier efforts; **Sierra**'s *Manhunter*, an adventure by the authors of *Ancient Art of War* and its sequel, which features some interesting approaches in cinematic point-of-view; and **Microprose**'s first *Red Storm Rising* product (featuring the submarine encounters depicted on the *Chicago*). Next month's issue will feature our interview with Tom Clancy (best-selling author of *Hunt For Red October*, *Red Storm Rising*, *Patriot Games*), and **Microprose** game designer, Sid Meier. We will also inform next month's readers of industry trends, product similarities, and expected releases for 1988 when we present the Winter C.E.S. Report.



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We were understandably proud when *GETTYSBURG: The Turning Point*™ won not one, but four prestigious awards: ■ Origins' Charles Roberts Award, Best Military/Strategy Computer Game. ■ *Computer Gaming World's* Strategy Game of the Year. ■ *Family Computing's* Critics' Choice Award, Best Strategy and Tactics Game. ■ *Fire & Movement's* Computer Wargame of the Year.

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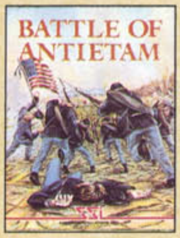
Refinements in the game system include the ability during play to switch between an overall strategic display and a super-detailed tactical map. Special morale rules for "green," untried troops have also been added.

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Guild of Thieves

by Alan Roberts

Title:	Guild of Thieves
System:	Amiga, ST, Mac, C-64, IBM, Apple II (no graphics)
Price:	$39.95
Designer:	Magnetic Scrolls
Publisher:	Firebird/Rainbird Waldwick, NJ

Alan Roberts has been a contributor to Fantasy Review *for several years. West coast science fiction fans are used to having him show up, pipe in hand, at any science fiction convention within driving distance of his Oregon home. In this review, he shares his views on Firebird's fantasy game.*

So you think you're clever, eh? Good enough to become amember of the famed Guild of Thieves? We've got a little exam for you (we were going to tie you to the back of a giant Kerovnian python and lower you into a mine full of rabid rats,but . . .). All you have to do is loot a local castle, go grave-robbing, jump down a well, that sort of thing. Not to worry, you'll be supplied with all you need to finish the job: jeans,striped tee-shirt, and a credit card. Remember, we'll be watching you.

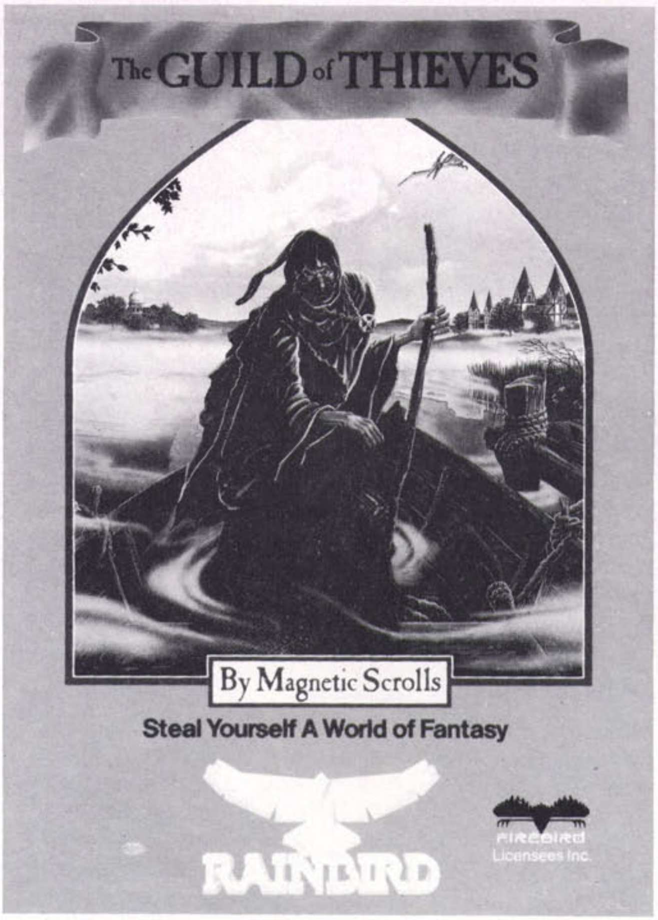
Guild of Thieves is a sequel to **Magnetic Scroll**'s *The Pawn*. However, one does not need to have played The Pawn to enjoy Guild of Thieves.

Mind Your Manors

Although most of the game is non-linear, a visit to the castle should be the first item of business. Not only are these the best pickings, but there are several items that you need to solve puzzles in other areas. Be warned, a simple "look" command may not be sufficient to reveal items in plain sight. "Look on cupboard" might show something overlooked by a casual search. Be sure to hang about until the running of the rat race. If you have time to kill, visit the library. The reading is as educational as it is humorous.

Milling it Over

The "surrounding countryside" is a square piece of land (three"rooms" by three) bordered by a river on three sides. A windmill lies



to the southeast, with one room and four puzzles to be solved. To the southwest is a small temple, and a good spot to save the game. Adventurers will get the opportunity to gospelunking. The hill in the northwest corner is riddled with passages, catacombs, a zoo, and the local bank. Here is where you first start getting points for the loot you have been gathering.

A Thousand Words Worth A Picture

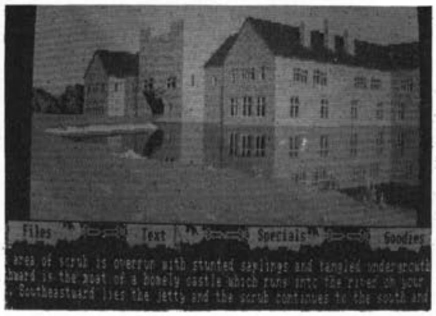
As an extra bonus, all versions except the Apple II include over a dozen top- quality illustrations. These periodically rolldown and cover 80% of the screen. This slows down game play, so you can replace them with postage stamp-sized "cameos" or shut them off entirely. On the machines with powerful graphics, these are a treat indeed. The Macintosh offers the options of stipple, dither, or freehand-style pictures. Graphics on the IBM version are only available on EGA screens; other screens run text-only versions. This is just frosting on the cake, though, as the text is sufficient to give the description and mood of the game. No extra clues are gained from the graphics.

Parser Snatching

The parser can accommodate long strings of commands. When the parser cannot understand a command, a prompt appears and the game continues after getting your response. "Open bag," you say. "Which one, swag bag or rubbish bag?" If you type "swag," it will continue from there. There is no need to retype the command. As with Magnetic Scroll's earlier game (The Pawn), Guild of Thieves has a helpful text editor. If you make a typing error, simply push a key and bring back the last command. The typo can be fixed with a keystroke or two.

To speed up the game, the Macintosh version allows you to define up to ten function keys with frequently used commands, like "get all." Unfortunately, the IBM and Commodore versions do not have definable keys.

On the minus side, the game was not rewritten for the American market. Remember to use English spellings (cheque/check, colour/color, etc.). Words like "yell" and "garbage" won't work; try "shout" and "rubbish". It is more civilized that way.



A Combination Graphics/Text Window From "Guild of Thieves"

Steal Tips

Included in each box (along with a parchment contract, credit card and a six- sided die) is the "What Burglar" magazine. The last fifteen pages are encoded hints. To get a hint, type "hint," return, and enter the long string of alphanumeric characters. On the average, you get three hints per puzzle. These range from the general to specific. Sometimes, a hint will end with a "+" sign. This means the hint is continued on the next line. If you make an error or two, there will simply be an error or two in your hint. Double-check anyway. You can only enter a hint when the program *specifically* asks you about one. This is one spot where the command editor won't help you.

Magnetic Scrolls chose a poor font to write the hint section with. It is hard to tell the difference between '1's and 'l's; I *think* they are all 'l's.

Some of the hints in the back are red herrings to keep you busy. After typing in the code for the puzzle "Why Can't I Open the Safe?", you are told in the last line to give up. Some hints are only slightly less cryptic after being decoded. "What Can I Do With The Billiard Balls" yields: "Play billiards; deviate from the straight and narrow; a straight answer is out of the question; the answer is contained within." Most hints are in the form of riddles and are fun for their own sake.

Thirty-nine different puzzles have hints for their solution. Others, like how to get out of the well, do not. Some puzzles, like opening the till, are a push over. On the other hand, the only way to solve "How Do I Get The Honey" is: "at the nuclear power station, collect the radioactive [+] isotopes and deposit them in the hive. Wait for the [+] next generation of malformed bees, which you'll find [+] have no stingers!"


What BURGLAR 3 Fg

Top Crook Slags Rookies Shock!

Top crook Silas Beaker says the profession will face disaster if young newcomers continue with their boycott.

"We just can't get the type of young person we want these days. Frankly, they seem more keen on accountancy and merchant banking."

INSIDE THIS ISSUE
- Exclusive! Interview with Guild Librarian Sigismund Thing 2
- Guild of Thieves apprentice exam - how to take the test, and how to WIN! 11
- Top Secret Coded "Cheat Sheet" stolen from Guild of Thieves - we reveal all 24

AND MUCH MUCH MORE!

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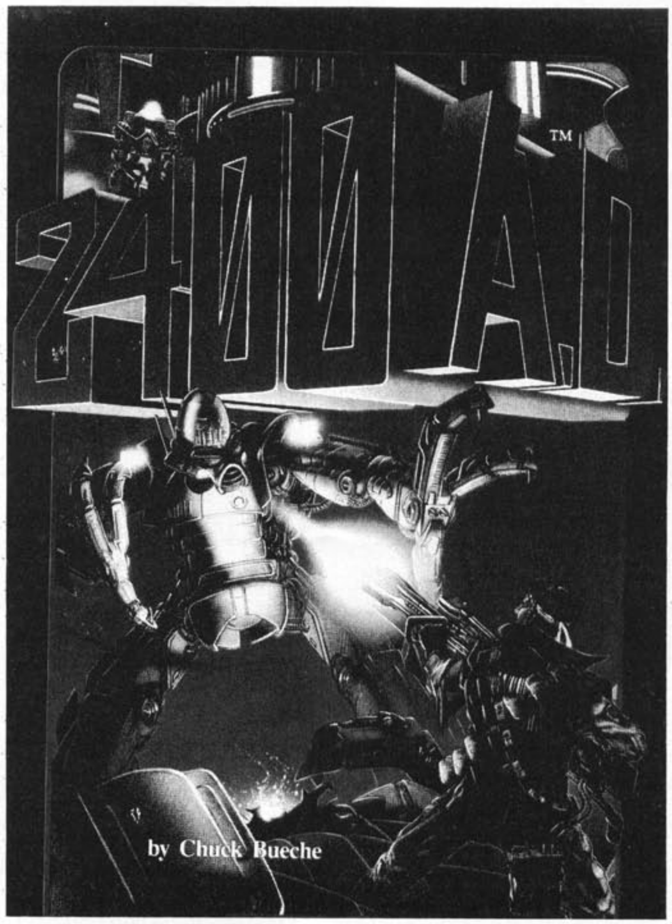
A Copy of "What Burglar"

Passing the Test (Reviewer's Conclusion)

The game must be highly recommended and it is *tough*. The off-beat British humor is a big plus. Frankly, The game compares well with the best of **Infocom**. Although the box says "Steal this game" on the back (and it is not copy-protected), they do have a protection scheme that kicks in after you've gotten far enough into the game to be willing to go out and buy your own.

One of the most popular hang-outs for adventure gamers is the tavern known as, "The Scorpion's Tale" (Our regular column offering revealing hints on some of the most topical adventure games available.). This month, Scorpia offers readers some advice regarding Origin Systems' new science fiction game, 2400 A.D.

2400 A.D.



As told by Scorpia

C'mon in out of the cold (hehe). We've got a nice blaze going in the fireplace, and Fred is making up your usual (don't worry, we've hidden the Alchemy books this time!). So, pull your chair up close to fire, get cozy, and we'll have a chat about the future . . . *2400 A.D.*

The basic plot is the time-honored one of a small group of rebels out to overthrow the evil empire. In this case, the evil empire (the Tzorgs) is represented by robots that keep the planet under control during the aliens' absence (they're off trying to conquer the rest of the galaxy). Your goal is to reach the master control console and shut off all the robots.

When you look at the striking, dramatic picture on the box and read the enclosed manual, "Notes From The Underground," you get the impression that you're in for a tough, exciting adventure. Then, you boot up the game and find that what you really have is Cartoonland.

What's Up, Doc?

The graphics are somewhat in the *Ultima* style, and quite good. Unfortunately, most of the robots and people have a definite "cartoony" look to them. Right off, you have a hard time taking this game seriously and can barely see the relationship between what's on your screen and what you've read in the manual. Unfortunately, it only gets worse from there.

All the human figures have a definite male appearance, regardless of sex. At times, it's a bit disconcerting to talk to a brawny man who says "Hi! I'm Lola, the receptionist." You'd think they could have managed to get some female figures in there.

Talking is what you'll be doing for much of the game. This is how you pick up the various bits of information you need to complete your mission. You go all over the city of Metropolis, as well as to the Underground (the large complex of tunnels set up by the rebels), trying to find the people who have the knowledge you require.

In some respects, this is not as easy as in an Ultima. There are basically three types of people. Dimwits have nothing of importance to say. If you talk to them, they make such remarks as "I despise robots!" or "Things were so much nicer before the Tzorgs came," etc. There are a lot of dimwits running around the city.

The second kind will be more familiar. They give you their names and generally make a reference to what they do. You can pick up on this in the usual way, feed it back to them, and get some information (most of the time, but not always).

The third kind is a little more mysterious. They just give you their names. "Hi, call me Chuck". Then, they wait for you to ask about the right thing. If you don't know what to ask about, you could have some frustrating times with these people. For some of them, I never found the right phrases and perhaps, there aren't any. Some are probably just red herrings to slow you down.

I T'ought I Saw a Public Twacking Office

To make your life more difficult, there is the 2000-move check-in. Every 2000 moves in the game, you must report in to the Public Tracking Office (there is a counter onscreen that thoughtfully keeps track of this). If you fail to report before the timer runs out, every robot that sees you will attack on sight.

Actually, this is not really as bad as it sounds. You see, they don't kill you. They just knock you out, confiscate all your items, and put you in jail. About the only way you could get yourself killed in this game is to step in front of a moving subway train (there's a little subway that runs around the city).

It's right about here that any last vestiges of reality break down entirely. Follow this carefully now. When

they put you in jail (called the Social Rehabilitation Center), your check-in timer is reset to maximum (1999), and all your social demerits (picked up for doing things like sneaking across to other city zones) are wiped out.

The cell you're put in is always in the same cell. That's the one with the secret panel in the wall, leading to a ladder that goes down to the Underground. So you climb down the ladder, and go out the exit on the west side of town. You sneak back across to the Central zone, and walk boldly into the ground level of the Social Rehab Center (from which you've just escaped), go to the right storage room, and pick up everything that was taken when you were arrested.

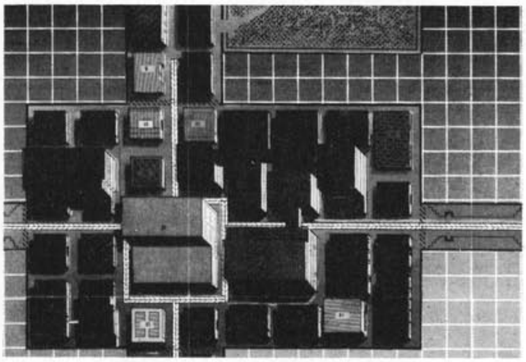
No one stops you. No robots will attack you. No alerts are sounded. No one seems to realize in the slightest that you have no business walking around the streets. Even the Public Tracking Office is never notified that you've been arrested. Believe it or not, this happens every single time you're put in jail.

So, getting bonked by the robots is an event hardly worth worrying over. Most of the time, you won't even have to think about it, as the robots generally do not attack unprovoked (at least not those on the city streets). Even should you get caught sneaking across the borderline to other parts of the city, the most that happens is that you get a social demerit and are put back where you came from.

On the other hand, you can do some provoking by shooting at robots with the various weapons available (for a price) in the game. You need money (called credits) and the only way to get it is to disable robots and search them. Early on, it's best to ambush a lone level-one type robot, search it, and get away from the area as soon as possible (your credits, by the way, are the one thing not taken from you when you're arrested).

Later in the game, you will have sufficient firepower and shielding to take on several robots at once. However, for these occasions, it's best to have at least two weapons and two shields with you, because these items have a rather distressing tendency to break at the wrong moment. Sometimes, you can fix them yourself. Sometimes, you'll have to visit Hugo's Fix-It Shop and ask him to repair the broken items (for a price).

The best weapon (which will take some time for you to obtain) is the plasma rifle, which is not only the most powerful, but unbreakable as



well. It also does a good job in blasting open locked doors (there are a lot of them in the game). Once you have this weapon, you can get rid of any others you may be lugging around with you.

One handy item you'll want sooner or later is a Scanner. This device shows you a picture of the surrounding area (much like the Ultima mapping gems). It requires no power, but is susceptible to breakage, and also sounds an alert every time you use it. Make sure you have a scanner with you when you go to visit the terminals with the robot deactivation codes. You'll need it.

Cheap Beep!

When the game begins, you don't, of course, have very much. Just a low-grade (empty) hand phaser, a grid reader (also empty, and which is used to give your position in the city, coordinated with a map that comes with the game), and a measly 100 credits. You have no idea how to get to the Underground (it isn't marked on the map).

The best way to get started is to visit Joe's Bar, second floor. After that, just go along, talking to everyone you meet. Remember that you can climb over things, such as counters, to get to other places in buildings. Doors that are locked can be broken open if you have enough strength, or you can try shooting them open or using a time bomb. If you're feeling less violent, you can buy forged passcards to open locked doors in the Underground. Breaking open doors will not set off any alarms, unless you use a bomb to do it.

One thing in the game that might give people some trouble is using the little transporters. There are five on the surface (one in each of the city zones), and several more underground in various areas. Using them is a two-step process. First, you need the access code (the same for all transporters), which you can learn in the Underground. Then, you need a destination code. Not all codes will work from all transporters. The destination codes have nothing whatever to with the numbers on the transporters. All the codes are two digit numbers, ranging (as far as I could tell) from 00 to 18. Use trial and error until you find one that works and make note of where it takes you. The transporters are very handy in moving you quickly around the city (and past the city zone boundaries without being seen).

As you near the end of the game, you'll start coming across the more powerful robots. Of course, even if they get you, it means nothing more than a trip to the cartoonland jail, but then you have to retrace your steps, which would be tedious (then again, you could also save frequently, and reboot if you get caught).

The best way to handle the higher-level robots is to let them run down. They are incredibly stupid things. Even if they can't get to you, they shoot their energy bolts, and eventually they just use up all their energy, coming to a dead halt. My favorite method was to disable one robot in a doorway, blocking it, then wait awhile. All the robots on the other side couldn't reach me (and

shots won't go past an obstacle), yet they would bounce around, shooting at the walls, until they stopped in their tracks.

Wile E. Character Generation

2400 A.D. is billed as a role-playing game, which means you get to create a character by allocating a bunch of points among four attributes. Don't put too much into Affinity. That will go up automatically as you talk to people (even then, I never saw that it had much relevance in play; people were willing to talk to me, no matter what my score was).

Put a good chunk of points into Agility, since this determines how accurate you are with weapons. Energy (your strength) should also start high. You can increase it by running a lot instead of walking (especially helpful when going through the long underground tunnels).

Intelligence is useful primarily for fixing things; the smarter you are, the better your chance of repairing a broken item (your energy and agility are also taken into account when trying to fix something). This doesn't have to start out very high, as it, too, will increase over the game.

Character creation is, thus, an uncomplicated procedure and shouldn't take very long to complete.

So mostly what you do in 2400 A.D.is running around a lot, talking to people, blasting robots when you need money (or if you just feel like it), and getting together the weapons and information you need to turn off the robots.

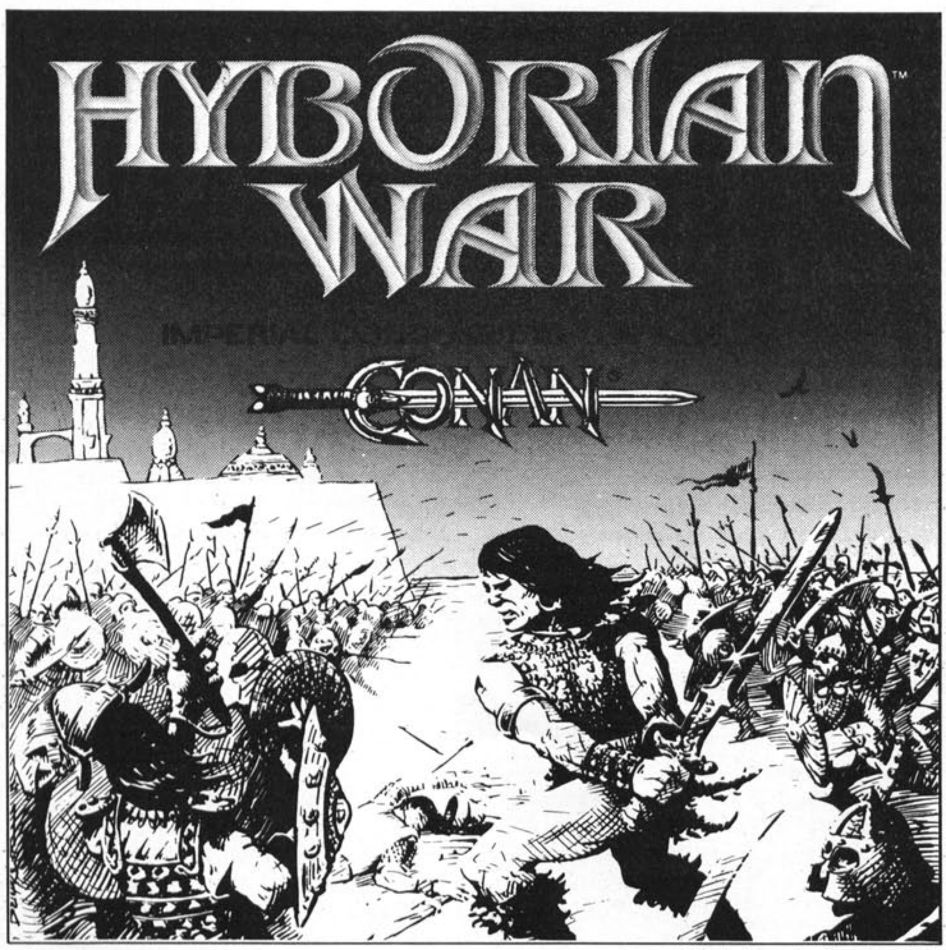
That's All Folks!

Overall, the game lacks intensity and is a disappointment. There are practically no puzzles, and hardly any challenge. It does not live up to the atmosphere and expectations generated by the "Notes From The Underground". Combined with the cartoony aspects, the whole thing is simply too unreal to be satisfactory.

Well, we've come to that time again (and none too soon!). Remember, if you need help with an adventure game, you can reach me in the following ways:

On Delphi: Visit the GameSIG (under the Groups and Clubs menu). On GEnie: Stop by the Games RoundTable (type: Scorpia to reach the Games RT). On The Source: Send Smail to ST1030. By US Mail (enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you live in the United States): Scorpia, PO Box 338, Gracie Station, NY NY 10028.

Until next time, happy adventuring!



Circle Reader Service #36



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Life in the Fast Lane

Accolade's "TestDrive"



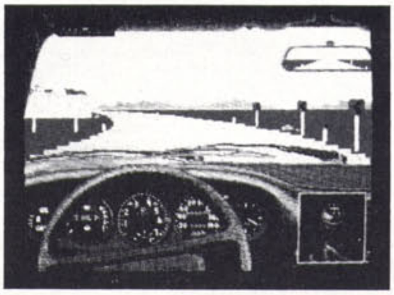
by David M. Wilson

TITLE:	Test Drive
SYSTEMS:	Amiga, C-64, IBM, ST
PRICE:	$29.95-$44.95
DESIGNER:	Distinctive Software
PUBLISHER:	Accolade Cupertino, CA

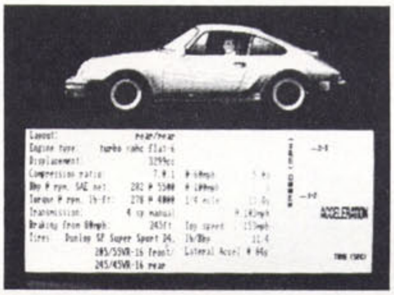
You're buzzing along at a brisk 120 MPH when the display on your radar detector lights up like a Christmas tree. In your rear-view mirror, you see the blinking red light of a "Smokey" and he's gaining on you. Now, a most important decision must be made. Do you pull over and take your ticket or continue acting like a daredevil and floor it. Of course, you decide to floor it. After all, it's only a game.

The game is **Accolade**'s *Test Drive*. It is somewhat different than most racing games in that the game gives players the choice of five of the world's most exotic high performance automobiles. One can drive a Ferrari Testarossa, like Tom Selleck on *Magnum P.I.*, or choose a Lotus Turbo Esprit. One can go domestic and choose the Chevrolet Corvette or go European with the Porsche 911 Turbo or Lamborghini Countach.

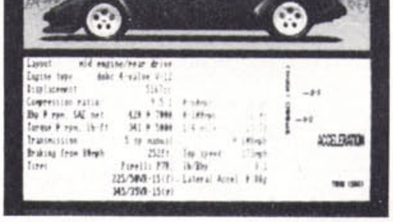
Once the player selects the model for the first "test drive," he begins his trek up "the rock," a treacherous mountain road. It may seem like a difficult way to begin a game, but where better to demonstrate the capabilities of each machine? Each car will be taken to the limit on a mountain road full of curves, up/down grades, and slow-moving vehicles (just begging to be passed).



Each vehicle will handle differently, because they are all different. For instance, the engine on the Lotus Esprit winds much tighter and much faster than the engine of the Ferrari. After playing with the Ferrari, I overwound the Lotus several times with the result of a "blown" engine. At the same time, I felt that the steering of the Lotus was much more responsive than that of the Ferrari. The Lamborghini's steering seemed least responsive. Players should, therefore, be aware of the strengths and weaknesses of each car. Assuming that one is better because it is the fastest can lead to poorer scores.



The radar detector and rear-view mirror should assist you in avoiding the Highway Patrol who have speed traps set up just for those "show-offs" among our readership. If players can't outrun the officer, they should pull over rather than having an unnecessary accident. Once he pulls in front of the player's car, the player is definitely going to be issued a traffic citation. It is impossible to pass the officer. One can either appear to succeed, only to have the computer assume control of the vehicle and receive the citation on behalf of the driver, or (worse, yet) one can rear-end the patrolman's vehicle which instantly ends the game. Apparently, highway patrolmen do not appreciate people who damage their fancy patrol cars.



As for the game mechanics, shifting is done by pressing the fire button on the joystick. An option allows players to emulate the shift pattern with the joystick, but it is extremely difficult to do this and steer with the joystick at the same time. The option is definitely worth trying a few times, but most players will simply choose to press the button.

The Amiga has several improvements over the C-64 version (and well it should). The Amiga has sharper images than the already crisp C-64 graphics, but the most notable difference is in the sound of the game. In the Amiga version, the sound of a speed shift has a realistic "screech" when the tires "peel out," but the speed shift of the C-64 has more of a "boing" (sorry, that is the best description available for the printed media). The C-64 version has a "Digital Display" option that makes your speed and RPMs easier to read. This is a very helpful option.

There may be more competitive racing games on the market, but this game combines the enjoyment of driving five of the most exotic sportscars in the world with outrunning "Smokies" on mountain highways. What more could a race car junkie (or arcade fan) ask for?!

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The Faery Tale Adventure



FAERY IS FAIR ENOUGH!

by Roy Wagner

Roy Wagner is "Mr. Amiga" in Southern California. He is one of the prime contact persons or an officer of, at least, three Amiga users' groups in the Los Angeles area. In this article, he offers a brief overview and some detailed hints on an exciting adventure game.

TITLE:	The Faery Tale Adventure
SYSTEMS:	Amiga, (IBM/C64 soon)
PRICE:	$49.95
DESIGNER:	David Joiner
PUBLISHER:	microillusions Granada Hills, CA

Island on the Screen (Overview)

The Faery Tale Adventure (FT) is a simplified role playing game (RPG) with a very natural user interface. It is simplified to the game player's advantage, but does not cause any significant loss in game play value. As a graphic RPG adventure, it shows some similarities to the early classic, *Temple of Apshai*, and the watershed *Ultima* series, but graphics and play action go far beyond these games.

It is a common story of a young man against an evil magician. Players take on the role of one of three brothers, whose father was killed seeking the evil Necromancer who had taken the talisman from the town's shrine. The king's daughter has also been kidnapped and must be rescued. The quest takes place on a very large island with a few scattered towns, taverns, and stone buildings.

The game begins with the turning pages of a book which tell players briefly of the story and the brothers, while appropriate music plays in the background. This music, an alternate theme of impending danger, and other themes for various specific locations will continue as the game proceeds. After this opening, which can be skipped by pressing the "Space bar," the program seeks the final words to three quotations that surround the map provided with the game.

The quest now begins in the town of Tambry as the player assumes the role of Julian, the youngest brother. The top two thirds of the screen displays Julian in the center and the area about him from an oblique overhead view. The graphics for this game are exceptional with very fine detailing of all objects and intricate shadowing. Stone, floor tiles and wood all appear very realistic. The playing map is 144 screens tall by 100 screens wide, but all movement is handled by scrolling smoothly from one place to another.

For Whom The Text Scrolls (Attributes)

Displayed on a parchment at the bottom left of the screen are four lines of text which describe events as they happen and display five values for the attributes of *Bravery, Luck, Kindness, Virtue,* and *Wealth*. The values are the same each time the game is played. Each brother has different fixed values, but the game is always started with Julian. *Bravery* is gained from encounters with the evil spirits and soldiers of the Necromancer. Fighting is most easily executed using a joystick, but the mouse or keyboard can also be used. Players gain one point for each enemy killed. With enough successful "kills," one may become nearly invincible. However, the initial armament is only a dirk and this weapon proves nearly useless. Even with a sword or mace, fighting is fairly tough in the early stages of the adventure.

When the *Bravery* attribute goes beyond 100 points, the only foes that still remain a problem are bowmen. Players can also use a bow, but are usually attacked by the combined arms of forces with both those with sword/mace and bowmen. Though one can switch weapons, the time taken to do so may easily work against the player.

Luck provides characters with a new life if they are killed. Each brother starts with a limited value of luck and once "out of luck," the quest passes to the next oldest brother.

Kindness is obtained by giving gold to the strangers which are encountered. Note that one can only gain one *Kindness* point no matter how many times he gives gold to the same individual. If these isolated

figures do not attack, they will generally provide one with useful information.

Vitality is the very essence of the character's life and functions like hit points in more traditional adventure games.

Wealth is represented by a number for the gold coins possessed. They are used to gain information or to buy food, vials, weapons and totems. Gold may be scavenged according to orthodox adventure game procedures.

The Sword Also Slices (Common Items)

There are only a few common items used during the adventure, but a number of each can be obtained. Some can be bought, but most are found in buildings, found just lying around, or taken from slain enemy bodies. There are a few one-of-a-kind items that are essential to completing the game. These are found in special places and from special people.

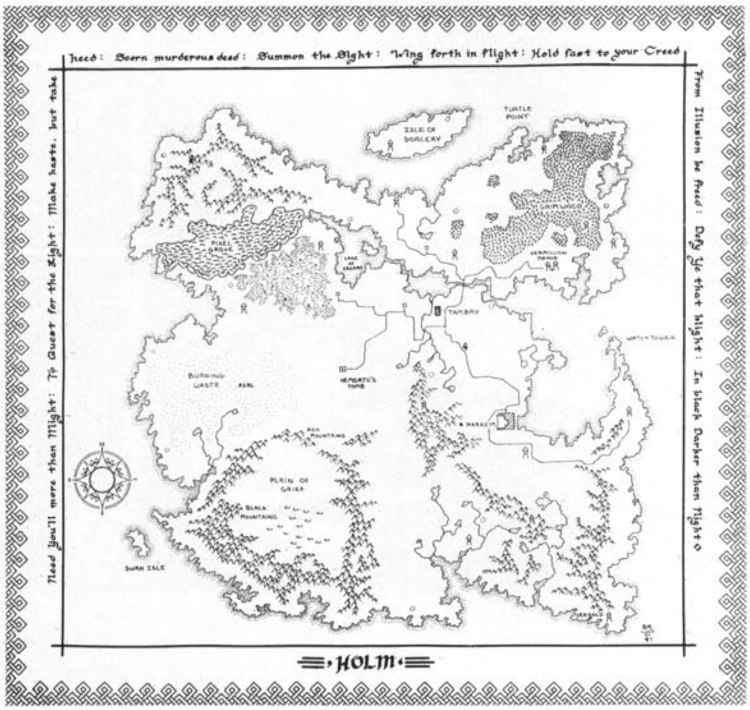
There are four common weapons: a dirk, sword, mace, and bow with arrows. Players start with a dirk. Other weapons are taken from goblin men, dark hooded figures, or skeletons slain in battle.

Food is usually bought and consumed at a tavern. This food cannot be carried. Food can be found, however, in some of the buildings and this food can be carried in order to be consumed when needed. Most buildings are locked and require one of six colored keys to gain entrance. The keys are colored grey, blue, red, white, green, and gold.

MAGIC ITEMS

Magic items are very useful. They can only be used once, but you will find plenty of them. All magic items can be easily and quickly put to use by selecting them with a quick press of one of the function keys. The use of each item is not documented, but rather left for you to figure out.

This task of "what do they do" has always bothered me in an adventure game. Some people like the challenge of determining what an item does. To me, however, repeatedly trying to use an item in different situations is just a waste of good game playing time.



Glass vials are used to increase one's *Vitality*. The amount of increase does seem to vary. Any vials found or purchased at the beginning of the game should be used before the character leaves Tambry. Jade skulls are used to cause immediate death for all lesser creatures in one's vicinity. Players should find one of these before they leave Tambry. By using it against an enemy armed with common weapons, they will quickly be in possession of a sword or mace. Gold Rings are used to stop time for a few seconds in order to disarm an enemy, take an item, or escape from a difficult situation. Green Jewels are used to see in the dark. Using the jewel will create an effect similar to infrared vision, lasting fairly long.

Blue stones can be used to transport to different areas on the map (which appear as a small circle of dots on the map provided with the documentation). The blue stones must be used from within one of the circles of large stone pillars, however. Eight pillars make up each circle. Based on the direction you last moved, you will be consistently transported to the same location from the same starting location. However, there are eleven different locations possible and the same direction in different circles leads to a different locations. (See diagram.)

Crystal orbs are used to see hidden objects. Bird totems are used to display a very large overview map of your current location. A skillful adventurer will make judicious use of the game's "Save" option to use the crystal orbs and bird totems and then, "Restore" them for use at another time.

Other magic items include a golden lasso, rose, sea shell, sun stone, and wand. These are one-of-a-kind and are for very special situations. Their use is hinted at from the conversations with the strangers you encounter.

To Have and Have Not (Getting Started)

Search all the buildings in Tambry. You should have found a glass vial and jade skull among other less important items. Visit the tavern and buy some food and another glass vial. Use the glass vials. You are now ready to start your adventure. "Save" the game first. This will require a formatted disk. (On the Amiga, if you have two drives, put the "Save" game disk in the other drive and the game will "magically" know to use it or any other unprotected disk in that drive.)

Leave the town by the eastern exit and proceed south staying on the

(Continued on page 50)

The Rumor Bag

(Continued from page 10)

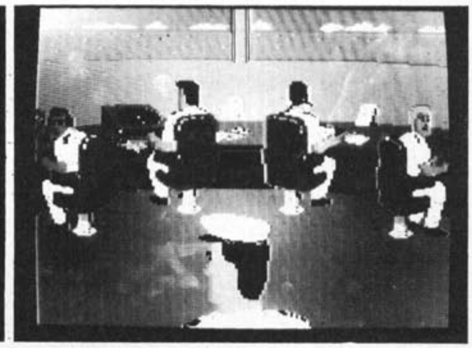
remembered my instructor's wise counsel, "When you fall, and you will certainly fall, fall up the hill." It sounds dumb, but it works. I came to a soggy, but safe, stop about six feet from the snow-maker. I heard my name called aloud and that surprised me. After a nervous look toward heaven to make sure I hadn't misunderstood what happened and this was, indeed, to be "my time," I turned around carefully to see who knew me. After all, no one except my editor knew I was here. So, who should I see, but a lovely public relations representative who had wandered down from the "Silicon Valley" for some fun and recreation. Always prepared, this feminine vision passed along a plain, white envelope with some screen shots and advance information on **Accolade**'s planned releases for the Winter Consumer Electronics Show. She also brought me my A.W.O.L. ski and we completed our daring trek down the gentle slope, together.

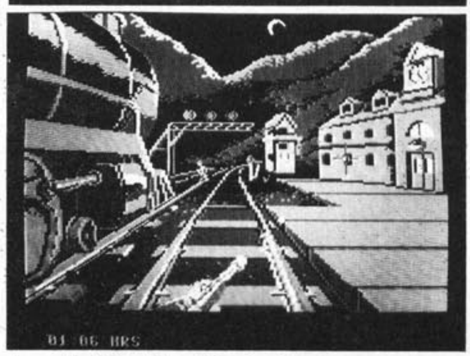
We shared a cup of hot chocolate and I eagerly opened the envelope. Inside were details about, *The Train: Escape to Normandy*. This C-64 product will allow the player to assume the role of Pierre Le Feu, leader of the French Resistance movement. In the course of the adventure, the player must seize the armored train, bring it to "safe harbor" in Normandy, and by so doing, rescue the priceless art treasures. The next document shared about *Power At Sea*, an action-strategy game for the C-64, based on The Battle of Leyte Gulf in World War II. Strategic decisions are made during scenes which take place on the bridge and the action sequences consist of: ship-to-ship surface combat, ship-to-air anti-aircraft routines, air-to-ship attacks, and ship-to-land bombardments. Another game to be announced at Winter CES is *Card Sharks* for the C-64. This card game allows the player to play against computer-controlled opponents which each have different styles and strategies for Poker (5 Card Stud, 7 Card Stud, or Texas Hold 'Em), Hearts, and Blackjack. All the games should retail for $29.95.

Accolade's "Card Sharks"



Accolade's "Power at Sea"





Accolade's "The Train: Escape to Normandy"



Tom Frisina Describes "Harpoon" Research to CGW Staffer, Johnny Wilson

I looked up from my reading and my p.r. snow bunny had disappeared. Fortunately, however, she had dropped a napkin with some notes on **Data East**. Those who liked *Ikari Warriors* will be excited to know that *Victory Road*, a sequel to the earlier game, has been ported to the C-64 and IBM. The company will also introduce an arcade-style, non-technical flight simulator, using real-time and excellent graphics. The title for this product which features full panel instrumentation and realistic skyscape is *Lock On* and it is expected to be released for C-64, IBM, and ST.

After securing the documents and photographs in the glove compartment of my car, I hit the slopes again. Well, I had intended to hit only the slopes. As it was, I found myself hitting an icy section of the slope and unable to come to the snowplow stop my instructor had shown me. Of course, the fellow I accidentally hit from behind felt like I had the "snowplow" part down pat. Our glasses, poles, and skis went flying. The other fellow, a rival journalist for another computer publication, demonstrated his lack of vocabulary by muttering an unprintable character string with scatalogical overtones. As for myself, as soon as I discovered that there were no broken bones, I made myself useful by picking up the notepad which had been dislodged in the fall. It was the other reporter's, of course, but I managed to catch of few scribbles

before I gave it back. He had noted that the third installment of **Intellicreation**'s *Alternate Reality* series is due to be released in mid-1988. The title is supposed to be *The Arena*. There was also a note about a 16-bit version of *Alternate Reality: The Dungeon*. No definitive release date was given.

Then there was a note about **Electronic Arts**'s alleged foray into interactive fiction. He had a note about their *Storyteller System* which is supposed to out "Infocom" **Infocom**. I chuckled to myself because I had been trying to get **EA** to confirm that rumor for six months. So far, the company says that this recurring rumor is way off base.

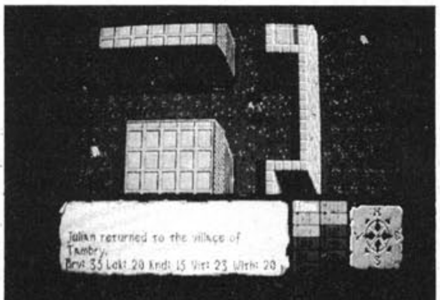
I handed him his notebook with a sigh of relief that he didn't know anything about **Three-Sixty**'s upcoming wargame, *Harpoon*. Based on the successful miniatures rules and boardgame (published by **Game Designers' Workshop**) by Larry Bond, this computer product should have an extremely different look and feel than anything else on the market. Bond, of course, assisted Tom Clancy with the best-selling novels, *The Hunt for Red October* and *Red Storm Rising*. He is a member of the Naval War College and acts as a referee for NATO wargames. According to our inside source, Bond will be teaming with former **Digital Illusions**' designer, Don Gilman, to create a layered product, user-friendly, but full of depth for the hardcore wargamer. The "Intelligence Phase" is supposed to offer 1/700th scale representations of up-to-date naval vessels and aircraft. There is a "Practice Battles" feature and the actual battle scenarios (the same types of scenarios which Larry Bond sets up for NATO wargames) will feature an Ultimate NATO Task Force with more than 50 platforms. Designed to be an educational product, as well as an entertainment experience, the documentation will be thick and detailed. It is intended as a supplementary reference to the game and not an integral part of the game. One unique feature is the "Staff Assistant," a help facility. When one is just learning the game, he can delegate any number of operations to the "Staff Assistant" whenever the intensity becomes too much to handle. When the player reaches a certain level of sophistication, however, the "Staff Assistant" can act as executive officer (XO) to the player.

Now that I think of it, I hope that other reporter didn't get a look at *my* notebook. In the meantime, if you want to keep the California ski slopes safe for those who know what they're doing, send your hot tips and rumors to: The Rumor Bag, c/o Computer Gaming World, P.O. Box 4566, Anaheim, CA 92803-4566.

The FaeryTale Adventure

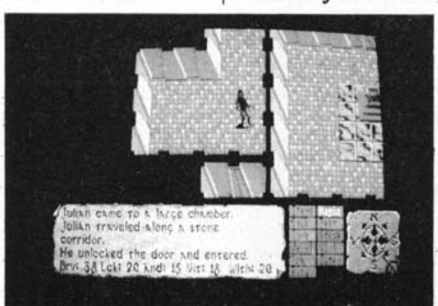
(Continued from page 47)

pathway. You should come upon a chest. Using "Take" will get you some additional items. You will soon be attacked. You will be "warned" of any attack by the change in music. Though you might get tired of the music and toggle it off, the advance warning is very helpful.



A one-time place of peace, the tiny hamlet of Tambry

You want to be successful in this first attack and "knowing" that it is coming, you should be ready to press F5 to use your jade skull and kill off all attackers. You can now "Take" from each body and arm yourself with a sword or mace. I found either to be equally effective. If the attack did not yield you a sword or mace, I suggest you "Restore" and try again. It is very important to have a good weapon before you travel anywhere else.



Within the Crystal Palace

As you travel about and time passes, you will need both food and sleep. Food is in limited supply and can only be found in a few buildings and bought at inns. You can only sleep inside of buildings on mats or in beds. If you do not get food or sleep, you will notice that your character staggers as it moves. With time, you may even collapse and be very vulnerable to attack. When fighting, just hold the button down and more towards your assailants. If two are playing, one can use the joystick to move and fight, while the other can control the mouse and easily perform many of the selected options, especially "Take" and "Save".



Passage from the frozen wasteland

Quest in the Afternoon (Brief Walkthrough)

You are now ready to actually begin your quests. Your ultimate quest, the goal of all your actions, is to defeat the evil Necromancer and get the Talisman. There are seven independent quests (or more, depending on how you count). There are several parts to completing each quest and accomplishing one will sometimes provide you with information and items needed for others. The following list of quests are not necessarily in the order that you must complete them, but in a somewhat logical order for achieving your goal.

First, you should build up a supply of keys of each color by wandering about the area surrounding Tambry. These will come from those defeated, as well as from searching buildings you come across. Once you have a white key, as well as some gold and grey keys, you can go to Marheim and visit the castle and the other buildings. You will be

(Continued on page 53)

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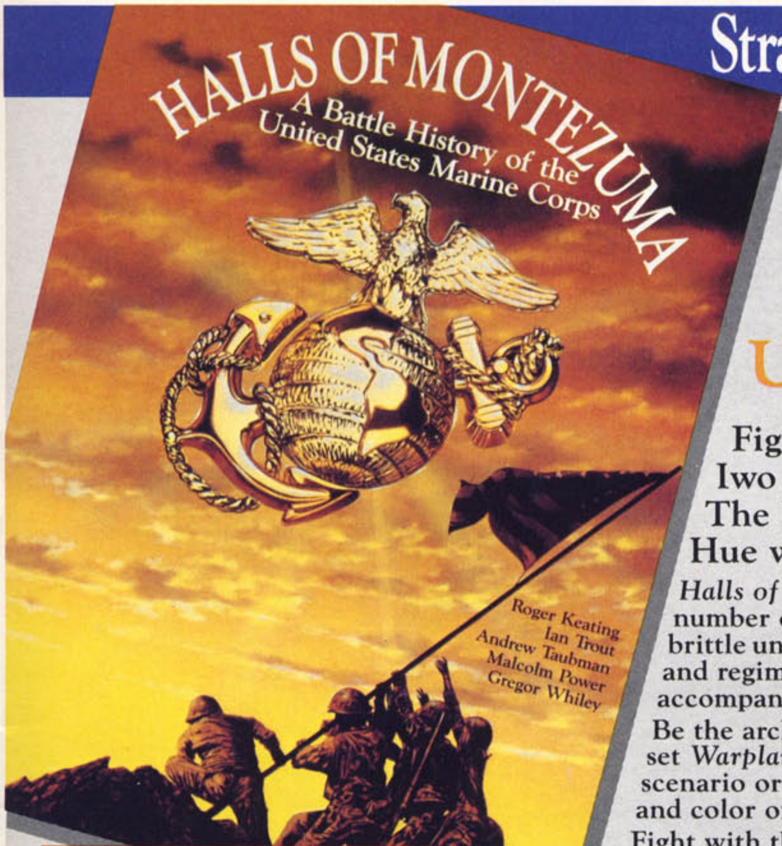
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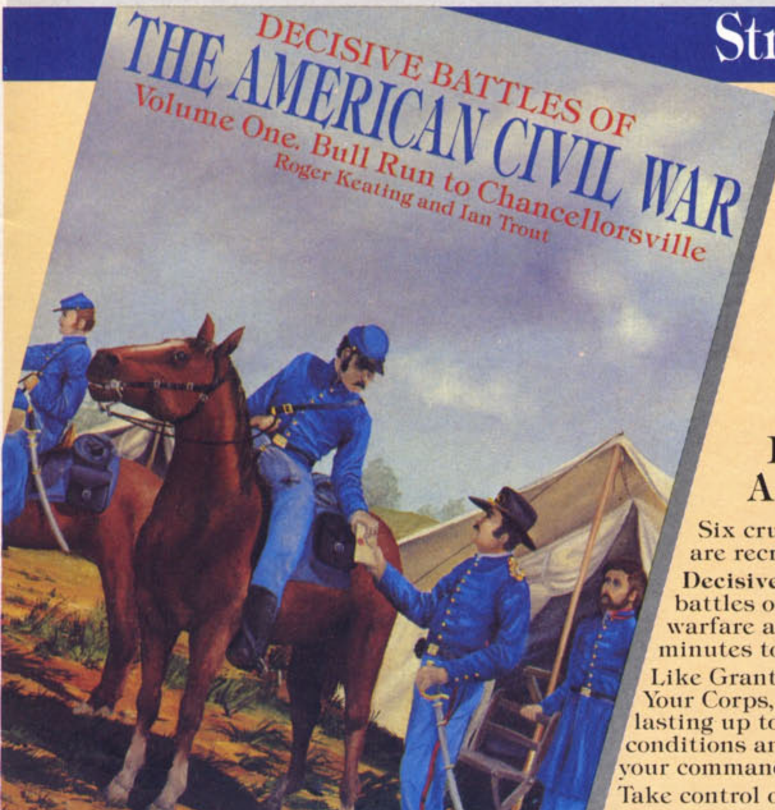
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The Faery Tale Adventure

(Continued from page 50)

able to find food, increase your vitality, and get useful information.

You can now proceed to the Watch Tower where you should find a sea shell. This can be used to travel across to the Isle of Sorcery where you will find the Crystal Palace. Here, you will meet with the Sorceress. If you talk enough with her, your luck should be significantly increased. She will also give you a statue. (You will want to collect five statues during the quest. If you happen to encounter some serpents or snakes from the sea, don't kill them. They will protect you from harm.

At Sea Hold, you will find another statue, but you must have another White Key. A visit to the Dream Knight's castle will provide you with the sun stone. This is used to provide strength to defeat the Witch. Inside the cave in the Mountains of Frost, you must get by a dragon to find the Magic Wand which will be used to defeat the Witch.

You will find the Witch in Grimwood. You should also find another statue. Once she is defeated, you will want to take the golden lasso, proceed to Swan Isle, and get the swan. It will provide you with yet another means of transportation. Fly to the Tower between Marheim and Sea Hold to rescue the Princess. This should indirectly provide you with another statue.

Next, go to the Hemsath's Tomb. This underground area will require some mapping; some easy and some a bit more difficult. You should not leave without another statue and a bone. You might also encounter someone with information for you. "Take" the bone to the Crypt north of the path between Tambry and Marheim. Exchange it for the shard which is needed to pass through the force field at the Citadel of Doom.

Having all five statues should make the Hidden City of Azal visible. Proceed there to get a rose which is needed to pass through the lava near the Citadel of Doom. You should now have all that you will need to defeat the Necromancer. You should also know that he is located on the Plain of Grief, but getting to him will still be quite a challenge. Defeat him, get the Talisman and you have completed your adventure. After all your efforts, the ending is somewhat anticlimactic, but very satisfying for all the work it took.

Don't plan on finishing this in a single evening. It will take some days to accomplish all that you must. Land travel in this game is slow, so getting and learning to use other means of travel can help greatly.

If you are having any problems with the "Restore" games not functioning correctly, you probably have an early release of the game and should send your disk back to MicroIllusions for a replacement at no charge.

This game is very impressive and a worthy addition to the game library of any computer adventurer. It is very playable, an excellent value for its price, and there will likely be a sequel available some time this summer.

Transportation Matrix

In *The Faery Tale Adventure*, players are transported to another circle as a result of the direction last moved prior to using a blue stone. Fatigued players should note that if they were staggering upon entering a circle, they may not have moved in the expected direction. The numbers on the matrix represent the following circles on the map:

1. West of Dragon's Cave
2. Isle of Sorcery
3. North of the Lake of Dreams
4. West of Grimwood
5. East of Grimwood
6. South of Pixel Grove
7. East of Tambry
8. South of Tambry
9. South of Burning Waste
10. Near mountains with Temple
11. Extreme south, near ocean.

When standing in the circle whose number is listed in the left column, characters will be transported to the circle whose number is under the column heading which reflects the direction in which the character last moved before using the blue stone. For example, a character who enters the circle which lies east of Tambry (7) by moving in a northeasterly direction will end up in the circle near the mountains with the Temple (10).

#	N	S	E	W	NE	NW	SE	SW
1	7	11	8	4	3	6	10	9
2	6	10	3	9	7	1	8	11
3	10	5	9	1	11	8	4	2
4	2	3	6	10	1	5	7	8
5	1	8	7	11	6	2	3	10
6	3	9	10	5	8	7	11	4
7	8	4	11	2	10	3	9	5
8	11	2	4	6	9	10	5	1
9	5	7	1	8	2	4	6	3
10	9	1	5	7	4	11	2	6
11	4	6	2	3	5	9	1	7

Taking A Peek

Continued from page 9

best-selling "King's Quest" series has created an animated graphics adventure for children. Children can communicate with the characters in the program (most of them from familiar nursery rhymes) by means of either text or pictures. Players help Mother Goose solve her problems by restoring the missing objects from nursery rhymes to the correct characters. IBM ($29.95). Circle Reader Service Card #12.

Simon & Schuster Software
One Gulf & Western Plaza
New York, NY

STAR TREK: THE REBEL UNIVERSE: The synthesized voice of William Shatner which opens the playing of this product on the Atari ST is incredibly authentic and the graphics are spectacular. In a departure from previous Star Trek titles published by Simon and Schuster, this adventure is a colorful, graphic approach to the familiar crew's adventures. There are more than 4,000 planets to weave the ship's path around and through in order to quell a rebellion against the Federation itself. C-64 ($29.95), IBM, ST ($39.95). Circle Reader Service Card #13.

Spectrum Holobyte
2061 Challenger Drive
Alameda, CA

SOLITAIRE ROYALE: This game teaches and adjudicates eight different adult solitaire games and three different children's level solitaire games using a deck of 52 playing cards. Many won't like playing solitaire without the handy ability to cheat when one feels frustrated, but those who want the challenge of winning within the rules will enjoy playing "Pyramid," "Golf, "Klondike," "Canfield," "Corners," "Calculation," "Three Shuffles and a Draw," and "Reno." IBM ($39.95). Circle Reader Service Card #14.

XOR Corporation
5421 Opportunity Ct.
Minnetonka, MN

BASKETBALL CHALLENGE: This is a sports simulation with enough depth to be an excellent coaching simulation. Unfortunately, the teams are not contemporary professional teams. Numbers from one to five move represent the players and move about the court to execute each play. IBM. Circle Reader Service Card #15.

BERMUDA SQUARE: So, you think you're good at puzzles, do you? This program is a mathematician's dream and the average schoolchild's nightmare. Players strive to fill one large square to capacity by means of smaller squares with lesser area. There is more than one solution and the company has a promotional contest with a $5,000.00 prize for the best solution. IBM. Circle Reader Service Card #16.

OLIGOPOLY: Form your own multinational corporation and own the world. That is the object of this multiplayer (2-6) game of geoeconomic intrigue which takes players from the boardroom to the third world. IBM. Circle Reader Service Card #17.

PRO CHALLENGE: For those who cannot afford the expensive "NFL Challenge" with authentic NFL rosters, this version which features the "All Pros" vs. the "All Stars" has the strategy of the earlier game without the chrome. It still features excellent graphics, however. IBM. Circle Reader Service Card #18.

CONVERSIONS RECEIVED



For the Amiga:

Into the Eagle's Nest (Mndscpe)
Moebius (Origin)
Superstar Indoor Sports (Mndscpe)

For the Apple II family:

Chuck Yeager's Advamced Flt Trainer (EA)
Tomahawk (Datasoft)

For the Apple IIGS:

Roadwar 2000 (SSI)

For the Atari ST:

Moebius (Origin)
President Elect 1988 (SSI)

For the C-64/128:

Might and Magic (New World)
Soko-Ban (Spectrum Holobyte)
Wizardry (Sir-Tech)

For the IBM:

Hardball (Accolade)
Might and Magic (New World)
Mini-Putt (Accolade)
Roadwar Europa (SSI)
S.D.I. (Cinemaware)
Shard of Spring (SSI)
Superstar Indoor Sprts (Mndscpe)
Ultima IV (Origin)

Reader Input Device

On this page, a number of games and articles are listed for evaluation, as well as some general interest questions. For each game which you have played or each article which you have read, place a 1 (terrible) through 9 (outstanding) next to the appropriate number.

Games

1. Ultima IV (Orign)
2. Might and Magic (New World)
3. Pirates (MicPr)
4. Starflight (EA)
5. Bard's Tale (EA)
6. Gunship (MicPr)
7. Bard's Tale II (EA)
8. Eternal Dagger (SSI)
9. Wizard's Crown (SSI)
10. Stealth Fighter (MicPr)
11. Gettysburg (SSI)
12. Anc. Art of War at Sea (Brdr)
13. Russia (SSG)
14. Chessmaster 2000 (STworks)
15. Rebel Charge (SSI)
16. Pres. Elect '88 (SSI)
17. Battles in Normandy (SSG)
18. Halls of Montezuma (SSG)
19. Warship (SSI)
20. Seven Cities of Gold (EA)
21. Alt. Reality:Dungeon (Datasoft)
22. Airborne Ranger (MicPr)
23. Apollo 18 (Accolade)
24. Wizardry IV (SirTc)
25. Falcon (Spectrum Holobyte)
26. Solitaire Royale (Spectrum Holobyte)
27. Demon Stalkers (EA)
28. Earl Weaver Baseball (EA)
29. 2400 A.D. (Origin)
30. 3D Helicopter Sim. (Sierra)
31. Thunderhawk (Datasoft)
32. Empire (Interstel)
33. Thunderchopper (ActnSft)
34. Infiltrator II (Mindscpe)
35. Def. of Crown (Cinemaware)
36. Border Zone (Infcm)
37. Beyond Zork (Infcm)
38. Legacy of Ancients (EA)
39. B-24 (SSI)
40. Breach (Omnitrend)
41. Shiloh (SSI)
42. Panzer Strike (SSI)
43. Search and Destroy (Brdrbnd)
44. Faery Tale Adv. (microillusions)

Articles

45. Helicopter Survey
46. AR: Dungeon Review
47. Test Drive Review
48. Guild of Thieves Review
49. All Screen's A Stage
50. Yeager/Hardware Review
51. Warped in Space
52. Rumor Bag
53. 2400 A.D. Hints
54. CES Report
55. Jewels of Darkness Rev.
56. Apollo 18 Review
57. Faery Tale Review
58. Falcon Review

Questions

59. Which type of article would you most prefer to see more often in CGW? (pick one)
 a) Comparative surveys of similar games
 b) Strategy notes for specific games
 c) Articles on the industry itself,
 d) Scenario construction articles
 e) Annotated bibliographies of games by catagory
 f) Traditional single title reviews
 g) Other (please specify)

60. Which type would be your second choice?

61. What percentage of time is your computer used for computer gaming as opposed to business, productivity, etc.

62. What is your principle gaming computer?
 a) Amiga
 b) Apple II+/e/c
 c) Apple IIGS
 d) Atari 8 bit
 f) C64/128
 g) IBM (and compatibles)
 h) Macintosh
 i) Atari ST

Game Ratings

"Defender of the Crown" abdicated from its position in the top 10 on the strategy side, while "Seven Cities of Gold" journeyed into the top 10 by default. RID fans will watch to see if the venerable exploration game can hold its own when it is evaluated once again. Meanwhile, "Russia"'s winter chilled slightly as it slid lower in the top 10. SSI had 5 titles in the top 10 and 10 in the top 20. SSG was impressive with all 5 of its rated games in the top 20 of the strategy side.

On the adventure side, the impact of the latest "Wizardry" release has yet to be felt with many readers still unable to find "Werdna" in the stores. So, there are no new titles in the top 10. Nevertheless, "Starflight" warped past the mages in New World's "Might and Magic" and left "Pirates" awash in its wake as the Electronic Arts' game regained third position.

Strategy Top 50

Name	Mfg	Machine	Tms Rtd	Avg Rsp	Rating
Gettysburg	SSI	Many	8	46	7.74
Kampfgruppe	SSI	Many	11	93	7.66
Anc. Art War/Sea	Brodr	IBM	1	21	7.48
M.U.L.E.	EA	C,At	18	77	7.44
Chessmaster 2000	EA	Many	9	38	7.31
Mech Brigade	SSI	C,Ap	11	57	7.28
Rebel/Charge	SSI	Ap,C,I	2	25	7.27
Battle of Antietam	SSI	C,Ap,At	9	43	7.23
Russia	SSG	Ap,C	4	27	7.21
Seven Cities Gold	EA	Many	7	118	7.20
War in Russia	SSI	Ap,At	11	58	7.20
Battlecruiser	SSI	Ap,At,C	2	26	7.19
War in So. Pac.	SSI	Ap,C	3	20	7.18
Carriers at War	SSG	C,Ap	4	81	7.17
Europe Ablaze	SSG	C,Ap	6	33	7.17
Crusade in Europe	MicPr	C,Ap,At	6	68	7.14
Reach for Stars	SSG	C,Ap	4	50	7.12
Battlefront	SSG	Ap	6	34	7.11
Battlegroup	SSI	C,Ap	3	37	7.11
Ancient Art of War	Brodr	I,M	8	34	7.10
Computer Baseball	SSI	Many	6	36	7.10
Defender of Crown	MstDes	Am,C,I	6	37	7.10
Heart of Africa	EA	C	3	27	7.09
Micro Lg Baseball	MicLg	Many	3	84	7.09
Star Fleet I	Intstel	Many	5	38	7.08
Balance of Power	Mdscp	Many	4	28	7.07
Colonial Conquest	SSI	Many	3	60	7.07
Decision in Desert	MicPr	C,At	9	36	7.06
Opr Mkt Garden	SSI	Many	4	58	7.06
Silent Service	MicPr	Many	6	108	7.06
Under Fire	AH	Ap	6	23	7.06
3-in-1 Football	Hafner	C,Ap,I	2	20	7.05
Carrier Force	SSI	C,Ap,At	5	108	7.04
Earl Weaver Baseball	EA	Am,I	1	27	7.04
Flight Sim II	SubLg	Many	6	84	7.03
Warship	SSI	Ap,At,C	2	42	6.96
Breakthru Ardenne	SSI	C,Ap,At	3	44	6.95
Lords of Conquest	EA	Ap,At,C	3	42	6.93
Field of Fire	SSI	C,At	5	67	6.93
U.S.A.A.F.	SSI	C,Ap,At	2	26	6.92
NAM	SSI	C,Ap,At	3	24	6.88
Ace of Aces	Accld	Many	1	28	6.86
Roadwar 2000	SSI	Ap,C	3	34	6.80
Computer Ambush	SSI	Many	6	49	6.78
Gato	SpHb	Ap,I,M	3	79	6.77
Gulf Strike	AH	At	4	33	6.75
Universe	Omtrd	Ap,I,M	3	46	6.73
No. Atlantic '86	SSI	A,M	2	72	6.65
Conflict in Vietnam	MicPr	C,At	4	20	6.63
Knights of Desert	SSI	Many	5	63	6.61

Adventure/Action Top 50

Name	Mfg	Machine	Tms Rtd	Avg Rsp	Rating
Ultima IV	Orign	C,Ap,At	10	90	7.84
Wizardry I	SirTc	Ap,I	20	72	7.69
Starflight	EA	I	8	37	7.66
Might and Magic	NewWrd	Ap,C,I	6	30	7.65
Pirates	MicPr	C	2	25	7.63
Ultima III	Orign	Many	14	105	7.55
Bard's Tale	EA	C,Ap	10	76	7.53
Gunship	MicPr	Am,C,I	6	43	7.53
Bard's Tale II	EA	Ap,C	6	47	7.46
Eternal Dagger	SSI	Many	1	21	7.29
Legacy of Llygamyn	SirTc	Ap,I	7	58	7.18
Wizard's Crown	SSI	Many	9	54	7.18
Knight of Diamonds	SirTc	Ap	11	53	7.17
Borrowed Time	Actvsn		1	27	7.15
Phantasie	SSI	C,Ap	9	70	7.15
Archon I	EA	Many	10	98	7.14
One on One	EA	Many	7	74	7.13
Elite	Fireb	C,Ap	5	45	7.10
Spellbreaker	Infcm	Many	5	24	7.09
Zork Series	Infcm	Many	7	122	7.09
Pinball Const. Set	EA	Many	4	47	7.08
Lode Runner	Brbund	Many	6	60	7.07
Phantasie II	SSI	Many	6	36	7.07
Questron	SSI	C,Ap,At	6	90	7.07
Sorcerer	Infcm	Many	5	58	7.07
WC Leader Board	Accss	Ap,C	3	23	7.04
Enchanter	Infcm	Many	4	45	7.02
Ultima II	Orign	Ap	8	61	7.00
Leather Goddesses	Inf	Many	2	31	6.98
Winter Games	Epyx	Many	1	37	6.97
Ultima I	Orign	Ap	2	48	6.96
Auto Duel	Orign	Ap	2	31	6.95
Moebius	Orign	Many	1	21	6.95
Deadline	Infcm	Ap,At,I	3	44	6.94
Rogue	Epyx	Many	1	26	6.92
King's Quest II	Sierra	Ap, I	4	35	6.88
Hitchhiker's Guide	Infcm	Many	4	108	6.86
Planetfall	Infcm	Many	3	51	6.86
Trinity	Infcm	Many	1	22	6.82
Summer Games	Epyx	Many	2	35	6.79
Wishbringer	Infcm	Many	3	36	6.79
Racing Dest Set	EA	C	3	49	6.78
Phantasie III	SSI	Many	2	23	6.76
Hardball	Accld	C,Ap	8	43	6.73
Marble Madness	EA	Many	2	20	6.71
Adventure Con. Set	EA	Many	4	49	6.64
Archon II	EA	C,Ap,At	4	76	6.64
Karateka	Brodr	C,Ap,At	3	79	6.64
Suspended	Infcm	At,Ap,I	6	61	6.63
World Karate Chship	Epyx	Many	1	23	6.57


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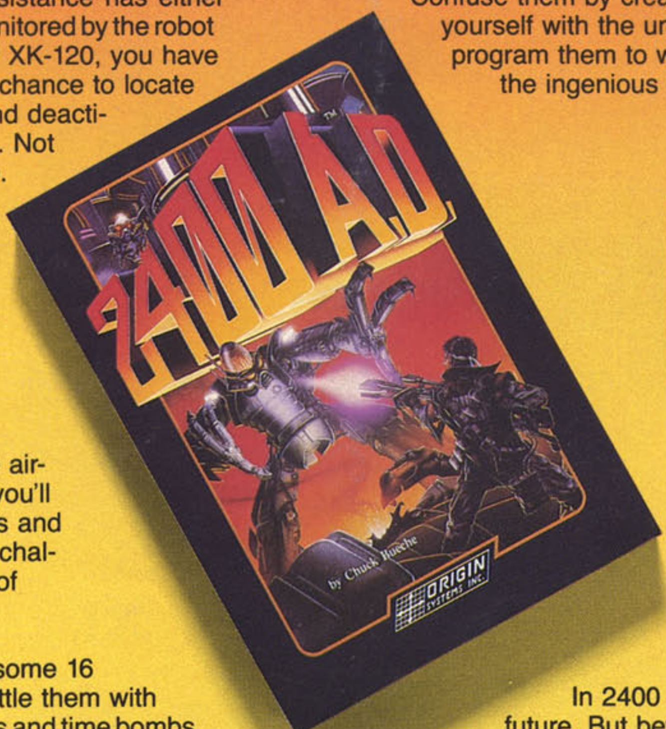
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